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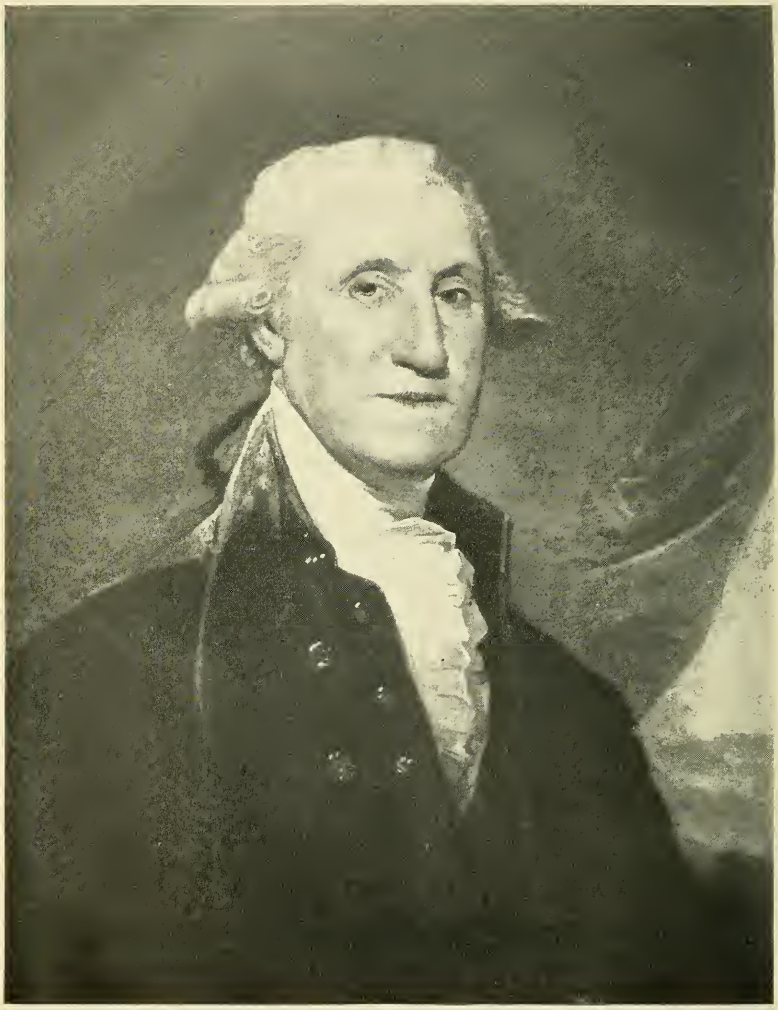
GEORGE WASHINGTON
BICENTENNIAL EDITION

THE WRITINGS OF GEORGE WASHINGTON



Gilbert Stuart's Portrait of Washington, Painted in 1796
(From the original in the Frick Collection)

THE WRITINGS OF

George Washington

from the

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1745–1799

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THE WRITINGS OF GEORGE WASHINGTON

THE WRITINGS OF GEORGE WASHINGTON

To ELIZABETH PARKE CUSTIS LAW[1]

Philadelphia, March 30, 1796.

My dear Betsey: Melancholy as the event is, on which you wrote the 25th. instant; and unwelcome as you knew the information must be, yet it was the part of prudence to communicate it as early as you did: and the precaution you took of writing to me, was well judged; and wd. have been necessary, had we not been previously prepared for the shock, by letters from Mr. Lear; giving an account of her situation, which left no hope, *in me* of a different result.

Mrs. Lear[2] was good and amiable, and your Society will feel the loss of her. But the Dispensations of Providence are as inscrutable, as they are wise and uncontroulable. It is the duty therefore of Religion and Philosophy, to submit to its decrees, with as little repining as the sensibility of our natures, will permit.

My compliments to Mr. Law. In a joint letter, written a few days ago to him, by your Grandmamma and myself, we offered you both our congratulations on your union. and I repeat them again, with sincerity, being Your Affectionate[3]

[1] Mrs. Thomas Law.

[2] Frances Bassett Washington Lear.

[3] From a copy of the original in the Chapin Library, Williamstown, Mass., furnished by Miss Lucy E. Osborne, librarian.

To THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

United States, March 30, 1796.

Gentlemen of the House of Representatives: With the utmost attention I have considered your resolution of the 24th. instant, requesting me to lay before your House, a copy of the instructions to the Minister of the United States who negotiated the Treaty with the King of Great Britain, together with the correspondence and other documents relative to that Treaty, excepting such of the said papers as any existing negotiation may render improper to be disclosed.

In deliberating upon this subject, it was impossible for me to lose sight of the principle which some have avowed in its discussion; or to avoid extending my views to the consequences which must flow from the admission of that principle.

I trust that no part of my conduct has ever indicated a disposition to withhold any information which the Constitution has enjoined upon the President as a duty to give, or which could be required of him by either House of Congress as a right; And with truth I affirm, that it has been, as it will continue to be, while I have the honor to preside in the Government, my constant endeavour to harmonize with the other branches thereof; so far as the trust delegated to me by the People of the United States, and my sense of the obligation it imposes to "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution" will permit.

The nature of foreign negotiations requires caution; and their success must often depend on secrecy: and even when brought to a conclusion, a full disclosure of all the measures, demands, or eventual concessions, which may have been proposed or contemplated, would be extremely impolitic: for this might have a pernicious influence on future negotiations; or

produce immediate inconveniences, perhaps danger and mischief, in relation to other powers. The necessity of such caution and secrecy was one cogent reason for vesting the power of making Treaties in the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate, the principle on which that body was formed confining it to a small number of Members.

To admit then a right in the House of Representatives to demand, and to have as a matter of course, all the Papers respecting a negotiation with a foreign power, would be to establish a dangerous precedent.

It does not occur that the inspection of the papers asked for, can be relative to any purpose under the cognizance of the House of Representatives, except that of an impeachment, which the resolution has not expressed. I repeat, that I have no disposition to withhold any information which the duty of my station will permit, or the public good shall require to be disclosed: and in fact, all the Papers affecting the negotiation with Great Britain were laid before the Senate, when the Treaty itself was communicated for their consideration and advice.

The course which the debate has taken, on the resolution of the House, leads to some observations on the mode of making treaties under the Constitution of the United States.

Having been a member of the General Convention, and knowing the principles on which the Constitution was formed, I have ever entertained but one opinion on this subject; and from the first establishment of the Government to this moment, my conduct has exemplified that opinion, that the power of making treaties is exclusively vested in the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur, and that every treaty so made, and promulgated, thenceforward became the Law of the land. It is thus that the treaty making power has been understood by

foreign Nations: and in all the treaties made with them, *we* have declared, and *they* have believed, that when ratified by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate, they became obligatory. In this construction of the Constitution every House of Representatives has heretofore acquiesced; and until the present time, not a doubt or suspicion has appeared to my knowledge that this construction was not the true one. Nay, they have more than acquiesced: for till now, without controverting the obligation of such treaties, they have made all the requisite provisions for carrying them into effect.

There is also reason to believe that this construction agrees with the opinions entertained by the State Conventions, when they were deliberating on the Constitution; especially by those who objected to it, because there was not required, in *commercial treaties,* the consent of two thirds of the whole number of the members of the Senate, instead of two thirds of the Senators present; and because in treaties respecting territorial and certain other rights and claims, the concurrence of three fourths of the whole number of the members of both houses respectively, was not made necessary.

It is a fact declared by the General Convention, and universally understood, that the Constitution of the United States was the result of a spirit of amity and mutual concession. And it is well known that under this influence the smaller States were admitted to an equal representation in the Senate with the larger States; and that this branch of the government was invested with great powers: for on the equal participation of those powers, the sovereignty and political safety of the smaller States were deemed essentially to depend.

If other proofs than these, and the plain letter of the Constitution itself, be necessary to ascertain the point under consideration, they may be found in the journals of the General

Convention, which I have deposited in the office of the department of State. In these journals it will appear that a proposition was made, "that no Treaty should be binding on the United States which was not ratified by a Law"; and that the proposition was explicitly rejected.

As therefore it is perfectly clear to my understanding, that the assent of the House of Representatives is not necessary to the validity of a treaty: as the treaty with Great Britain exhibits in itself all the objects requiring legislative provision; And on these the papers called for can throw no light: And as it is essential to the due administration of the government, that the boundaries fixed by the constitution between the different departments should be preserved: A just regard to the Constitution and to the duty of my Office, under all the circumstances of this case, forbids a complyance with your request.[4]

*To TOBIAS LEAR

Philadelphia, March 30, 1796.

My dear Sir: Your former letters prepared us for the stroke, which that of the 25th instant announced; but it has fallen heavily notwithstanding.

It is the nature of humanity to mourn for the loss of our friends; and the more we loved them, the more poignant is our grief. It is part of the precepts of Religion and Philosophy, to consider the Dispensations of Providence as wise, immutable, uncontroulable; of course, that it is our duty to submit with as little repining, as the sensibility of our natures is capable of to all its decrees. But nature will, notwithstanding, indulge, for a while, its sorrows.

[4]From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*. A comparison of Pickering's draft of the message in the *Washington Papers*, shows a few alterations by Charles Lee.

To say how much we loved, and esteemed our departed friend, is unnecessary. She is now no more! but she must be happy, because her virtue has a claim to it.

As you talked of coming to this place on business, let us press you to do so. The same room that serves Mr. Dandridge and Washington is large enough to receive a Bed also for you; and it is needless to add, we shall be glad of your company. The change may be serviceable to you; and if our wishes were of any avail, they would induce you to make your stay here as long as your convenience would permit.

At all times, and under all circumstances, we are, and ever shall remain, Your sincere and Affectionate friends.[5] [M.L.]

*To ALEXANDER HAMILTON

(Private)

Philadelphia, March 31, 1796.

My dear Sir: I do not know how to thank you sufficiently, for the trouble you have taken to dilate on the request of the House of Representatives for the Papers relative to the British Treaty; or how to apologize for the trouble (much greater than I had any idea of giving) which you have taken to shew the impropriety of that request.[6]

From the first moment, and from the fullest conviction in my own mind, I had resolved to *resist the principle* wch. was evidently intended to be established by the call of the House of Representatives; and only deliberated on the manner, in which this could be done, with the least bad consequences.

To effect this, three modes presented themselves to me: 1. a denial of the Papers in toto, assigning concise, but cogent

[5] This letter is also signed "M. Washington."

[6] Hamilton's draft of a proposed reply to the House of Representatives is in the *Washington Papers*.

reasons for that denial; 2. to grant them in whole; or 3. in part; accompanied with a pointed protest against the right of the House to controul Treaties, or to call for Papers without specifying their object; and against the compliance being drawn into precedent.

I had as little hesitation in deciding that the first was the most tenable ground, but from the peculiar circumstances of *this case* It merited consideration, if the *principle* could be saved, whether facility in the provisions might not result from a compliance. An attentive examination however of the Papers and the subject, soon convinced me that to furnish *all* the Papers would be highly improper; and that a *partial* deliver of them would leave the door open for as much calumny as the entire refusal, perhaps more so, as it might, and I have no doubt would be said, that all such as were essential to the purposes of the House, were withheld.

Under these impressions, I proceeded, with the heads of Departments and the Attorney General, to collect materials; and to prepare an answer, subject however to revision, and alteration, according to circumstances. This answer was ready on Monday, and proposed to be sent in on Tuesday but it was delayed until I should receive what was expected; not doing it definitively on that day, the delivery of my answer was further postponed till the next; notwithstanding the anxious solicitude which was visible in all quarters, to learn the result of Executive decision.

Finding that the draft I had prepared, embraced most, if not all the principles which were detailed in the Paper I received yesterday; though not the reasonings. That it would take considerable time to copy the latter, and above all, having understood that if the Papers were refused a fresh demand, with strictures might be expected; I sent in the answer wch. was

ready; reserving the other as a source for reasoning if my information proves true.

I could not be satisfied without giving you this concise acct. of the business. To express again my sincere thanks for the pains you have been at to investigate the subject, and to assure you, over and over, of the warmth of my friendship and of the affectionate regard with which I am etc.[7]

*To GEORGE WASHINGTON MOTIER LAFAYETTE

Philadelphia, March 31, 1796.

My dear Sir: Your letter of the 28th instt. was received yesterday. The enclosures which accompanied it, evidence much discretion; and your conduct therein meets my entire approbation.

In the early part of this month, I put a letter into the hands of Colo. Hamilton, inviting you to this place; and expected, until your letter of the above date was received, to have embraced you, under my own roof, tomorrow or next day.

As the period for this, seems to be more distant, from the purport of your enquiries; I again repeat my former request; and wish that without delay, you and Mr. Frestel, with your baggage &ca. would proceed immediately to this City, and to my house; where a room is prepared for you and him.

Under expectation of your doing this, it is as unnecessary, as it might be improper, to go more into detail until I have the pleasure of seeing you; and to render every service in my power to the Son of my friend, for whom I have always entertained the purest Affections. These are too strong not to extend themselves to you. Therefore believe me to be, as I really am, Sincerely and Affectionately Yours, &c.

[7] From the *Hamilton Papers* in the Library of Congress.

To THE SENATE

United States, March 31, 1796.

Gentlemen of the Senate: The Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation between the United States and Great Britain, requiring that Commissioners should be appointed to fix certain boundaries between the Territories of the contracting parties, and to ascertain the losses and damages represented to have been sustained by their respective Citizens and Subjects, as set forth in the fifth, Sixth and Seventh Articles of the Treaty; In order to carry those Articles into Execution, I nominate as Commissioners on the part of the United States,[8] "For the purpose mentioned in the fifth Article, Henry Knox of Massachusetts: For the purpose mentioned in the Sixth Article, Thomas Fitzsimons of Pennsylvania, and James Innes of Virginia: and For the purpose mentioned in the Seventh Article, Christopher Gore of Massachusetts and William Pinckney of Maryland." [9]

To WILLIAM PEARCE

Philadelphia, April 3, 1796.

Mr. Pearce: Your letter of the 27th ulto, with a Postscript of the 29th, came duly to hand yesterday.

As I have expectation that by the time this letter will have reached you, a Vessel from Liverpool called the Commerce, will have arrived at George Town with eight bushels of the field Pea;[10] as much of the Chiccory as will sow four acres of land; and eight bushels of the Winter Vetch for, and on my

[8] The Senate confirmed these nominations April 1.
[9] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[10] See Washington's letter to Thomas Pinckney, May 22, 1796, *post*.

account, I request you to have the two first sowed as soon as you are able. By looking into some of the farming books I lent you, you will discover what quantity of the Pease to allow to the Acre. If these shd be silent, allow two bushels sowed broad cast: at any rate do not give as much as the English husbandry directs, for the quantity allowed in that country (formerly at least) greatly exceeds ours. I sent for as much Chiccory as would sow four acres of ground, but not mentioning whether in drills or broad cast, I am unable to give you any particular direction on this head; and therefore must leave it to yourself to judge from the quantity of seed, whether it is designed for four acres broad cast, or four acres in drills that the seed is adequate to. The Vetches must be secured in the Seed loft for fall sowing.

If the Chiccory is as valuable for Soiling horses (that is giving it to them green) as I am told it is; I think it would be desirable to allow a proportional quantity of it to each of the four farms; to be sown as convenient as may be to the Stables. As you did not, in enumerating the different places in which Oats were to be sowed, mention any for the ground that was in Potatoes, near the quarter, at Mansion house; I think, if it is yet unsown, it would be a good spot (or as much thereof as is necessary) to sow the Pease in: and I see no reason why clover may not be sown with them, as well as with Oats. If this ground should have been seeded already, sow them wherever you please; and with as little delay as possible. Do the same with the Chiccory, as the Season is getting late, and if it continues dry they will come to nothing without.

In one of my letters, I mentioned planting the vacant ground in the Corn field, at Mansion Ho, with Corn, along with the New ground; but in my next letter, I suggested the idea of putting it in Oats, to avoid letting the other part lying waste,

or the expence of a fence. But I leave it to you to do what you think best, or rather what you are able to accomplish. My plan always was, and always will be, to attempt no more than can be executed *well*. And this made me desirous of cultivating all the New ground; being well convinced that it will soon be as bad as ever, if the roots and sprouts are not destroyed by this means.

In one of your late letters, speaking of the damage done by the Wind, you mentioned its having blown down many Trees: it did not occur to me at that time, that this might have happened to the Trees in the yards, gardens, or Lawns. If this was the case, I hope they were set up again.

If the locust Posts for the circle, are ready, let them be put up. And if you should sell the flour on the terms I have mentioned, take care that the payment is well secured.

Mr. Minor has recommended a Mr. Darnes,[11] as a Tenant, whom he thinks would preserve my land near Alexandria from the Tresspasses it undergoes; and I have, in the enclosed letter (left open for your perusal) requested him to put the said Darnes on. Let the letter be sent to him that he may certainly get it. (And let Mr. Darnes have the field you speak of, and more ground if necessary, to put a house on. But make your agreement with him in writing; that there may be no mistakes. I should not incline to give him a surety of the place for more than 5, 6 or 7 yrs, for the rest I care not.)

Unless I rent my Farms, and I have very little expectation of doing it, for the next year, I shall be indifferent about renting my Mill; unless tempted by a good price: but without letting this be known you may learn from Mr. Gill what his friend, or any other, would give for her, for the term of years I have offered her.

[11] George Minor and ——— Darnes were overseers of the poor in Alexandria, Va.

Let me know the exact size of the Chimney in the New room, at the Mansion house; that is, how wide at the front, and at the back, and how deep at the sides; and whether the sides are of Marble. Let me know also how far the chimney piece projects from the plaistering above it; whether there is a middle part that projects more than the rest; how much, and the width of it, &ca; and what the whole length of the chimney piece at top is, from side to side or end to end. I am etc.[12]

To HENRY KNOX

Philadelphia, April 4, 1796.

My dr. Sir: Before this will have reached you, you must have seen in the gazettes, that I have taken the liberty (without a previous consultation) to nominate you the Commissioner for ascertaining the true St. Croix and the Eastern boundary of the U States, agreeably to the fifth article of the treaty lately entered into with G. Britain. I hope it will be convenient and agreeable for you to accept the trust, the appointment having been confirmed by the Senate.

As the gazettes will give you in detail a resolution of the House of Representatives, calling upon the President for all the papers (excepting such as might respect pending treaties) relative to that treaty; also the debates thereupon,[13] and my answer, it is unnecessary to repeat them. I am beginning to

[12] From the printed text in M. D. Conway's *George Washington and Mount Vernon*, Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4).

[13] The debate on making provision for carrying Jay's Treaty into effect raged in the House from Wednesday, April 7, to Saturday, April 30, when a motion declaring the treaty "highly objectionable" received 48 ayes and 48 noes. The Speaker then voted "No." A motion, declaring the treaty "objectionable," received 49 ayes and 49 noes. The Speaker again voted "No." A motion for carrying the treaty into effect received 51 ayes and 48 noes. On May 3 a bill making appropriations towards defraying the expenses for carrying the treaty into effect passed the House without a yea and nay vote.

receive what I had made my mind up for on this occasion, the abuse of Mr. Bache and his correspondents. The answer, which I have given, is referred to a Committee of the whole house for wednesday next; the probable result of which, it is too early yet to predict or even to guess at. These are unpleasant things, but they must be met with firmness. Present me to Mrs. Knox and the family in acceptable terms and be assured of the friendship and affectionate regard &c.

P. S. At a proper time, after knowing whether you accept the appointment. or not,[14] you will hear officially from the Secretary of State.[15]

To WILLIAM PEARCE

April 4, 1796.

Mr. Pearce: If Mrs. Green and her family are really in distress, afford them some relief; I cannot say to what amount, because that depends upon the nature and extent of it. But in my opinion it had better be in anything than money, for I very strongly suspect that all that has, and perhaps all that will be given to her in that article, is applied more in rigging herself, than in the purchase of real and useful necessaries for her family. To aid her in this way is not my intention, but you will, from enquiry, know what her real situation is, and govern yourself thereby.

If She cannot support her children she ought to bind them to good Masters and Mistresses, who will learn them Trades and do that justice by them which the Law directs. I am &ca.[16]

[14] Knox declined, and David Howell, of Rhode Island, was confirmed by the Senate in his stead, May 21.

[15] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[16] From the printed text in M. D. Conway's *George Washington and Mount Vernon*, Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4), where Sarah Green's letter of Mar. 23, 1796, from Alexandria, Va., to Washington, is also printed.

To JAMES INNES

Philadelphia, April 4, 1796.

Dear Sir: Before this can have reached your hands, the gazettes will have announced to you that I have taken the liberty (without previous consultation) to nominate you, conjointly with Thos. Fitzsimons esqr. an intelligent merchant of this City, one of the Commissioners for carrying the Sixth article of the treaty lately entered into with G. Britain, into effect. As the nomination is confirmed by the Senate, I hope it will be convenient and agreeable to you to accept the trust;[17] for the duties whereof, and other matters relative thereto the article itself will be sufficiently explanatory.

The compensation will not be less, I conceive, than £1000 sterlg. per annum; but as it is not absolutely fixed yet, I cannot speak with more decision on the subject; and request that this letter may not be considered as an official one; but meant only to intimate what has been done, and to know your sentiments thereon; the rest you will receive in due time from the Secy. of State. With esteem and regard, etc.[18]

*To ELIZABETH WASHINGTON LEWIS

Philadelphia, April 7, 1796.

My dear Sister: Your letter of the 27th. Ulto. was enclosed to me by Mr. Parks, in one from himself, dated the 1st instt. on the same subject.

Harriot having very little fortune herself, has no *right* to expect a great one in the man she marry's; but if he has not a

[17] Innes's letter of acceptance (April 8) is in the *Washington Papers.*
[18] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

competency to support her in the way she has lived, in the circle of her friends, she will not find the matrimonial state so comfortable as she may have expected when a family is looking up to her and but scanty means to support it.

Altho' she has no right to expect a man of fortune, she certainly has just pretentions to expect one whose connexions are respectable, and whose relations she could have no objection to associate with. How far this is, or is not the case with Mr. Parks, I know not, for neither his own letter, or yours give any acct. of his family nor whether he is a native or a foreigner; and we have his own word only for his possessing *any* property at all altho' he estimates his fortune at £3000. A precarious dependence this when applied to a man in Trade.

I do not wish to thwart Harriots inclination if her affects. are placed on Mr. Park and if upon the enquiries I shall make or cause to be made into his family and connexions, there shall be found nothing exceptionable in them; that he is, as you say "very much respected by all his acquaintance, sober, sedate, and attentive to business;" and is moreover in good business; I shall throw no impedimt. in the way of their Marriage: altho' I should have preferred, if a *good* match had not offer'd in the meanwhile that she shd. have remained single until I was once more settled at Mt. Vernon and she a resident there which, if life is spared to us, will certainly happen to me in ten or eleven Months; because then she would have been in the way of seeing much company, and would have had a much fairer prospect of matching respectably than with one who is little known, and of whose circumstances few or none can know much about.

Having had no business to write to you upon, and being very much occupied by my public duties, are the only reasons why I have been silent. I am persuaded you will enjoy more ease

and quiet, and meet with fewer vexations where you now are, than where you did live. It is my sincere wish that you should do so and that your days may be happy; in these Mrs. Washington joins with Your most Affecte. Brother[19]

*To GEORGE LEWIS

Philadelphia, April 7, 1796.

Dear Sir: Tuesday's Post brought me a letter from a Mr. Andrew Parks of Fredericksburgh, covering one from your Mother; both on the subject of overtures of marriage made by the former to your cousin Harriot Washington:[20] which, it seems, depend upon my consent for consummatn.

My sister speaks of Mr. Parks as a sober, discreet man; and one who is attentive to business. Mr. Parks says of himself, that his "fortune at present, does not much exceed £3000, but with industry and œconomy, he has every expectation of rapidly improving his condition" being concerned with his brother in law, Mr. McElderry of Baltimore, in Mercantile business.

As I am an entire stranger to Mr. Parks; to his family connexions, or his connexions in trade; to his mode of living; his habits, and to his prospects in trade; I should be glad if you wd. ascertain them with as much precision as you can, and write me with as little delay as you can well avoid.

Harriot having little or no fortune of her own, has no right to expect a great one in the man she marrys: but it is desirable she should marry a gentleman; one who is well connected, and

[19] From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach, of New York City.

[20] Harriet, the youngest child of Samuel Washington and his fourth wife (Anne Steptoe Allerton), was born, Aug. 12, 1776. Andrew Parks, son of John Parks, of Baltimore, Md., lived at Fredericksburgh, Va. He and Harriet married in July, 1796, and moved to Kanawha Salines (then Virginia), now Malden, W. Va., in 1818. Harriet died at Kanawha Salines in January, 1822.

can support her decently, in the line she has always moved, otherwise she would not find matrimony with a large family and little means, so eligable as she may have conceived it to be. I am etc.

This letter will be accompanied by one to my Sister which I pray you to receive from the Post Office and send to her.

[H. S. P.]

To ANDREW PARKS

Philadelphia, April 7, 1796.

Sir: Your letter of the first instt has been duly received. The subject on which it is written is a serious one, and it shall meet, as it deserves, a serious consideration.

My niece Harriot Washington having very little fortune of her own, neither she, nor her friends, have a right to make *that* (however desirable it might be) a primary consideration in a matrimonial connexion. But there are other requisites which are equally desirable, and which ought to be attended to in a union of so much importance; without therefore expressing at this moment, either assent, or dissent, to the proposal you have made, it is necessary for me to pause.

My wish is to see my niece happy; one step towards which, is for her to be united with a gentleman of respectable connexions; and of good dispositions; with one who is more in the habit (by fair and honorable pursuits) of making than [in] spending money; and who can support her in the way she has always lived.

As you propose being in Baltimore in the course of a few weeks, I shall not object to the receipt of any further details on this subject, which you may be disposed to give from that place: which when received may enable me to write more

decisively from hence, or from Virginia when I get there: which will happen, I expect as soon as Congress shall have closed its session. I am etc.[21]

To THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

United States, April 8, 1796.

Gentlemen of the Senate and of the House of Representatives: By an Act of Congress passed in the 26th of May 1790 it was declared that the Inhabitants of the territory of the United States south of the river Ohio, should enjoy all the privileges, benefits and advantages set forth in the ordinance of Congress for the government of the territory of the United States north-West of the river Ohio; and that the government of the said territory south of the Ohio should be similar to that which was then exercised in the territory North-West of the Ohio; except so far as was otherwise provided in the conditions expressed in an Act of Congress passed the 2d. of April 1790, entitled "An Act to accept a cession of the claims of the State of North Carolina to a certain district of Western territory."

Among the privileges, benefits and advantages thus secured to the Inhabitants of the territory south of the Ohio, appear to be the right of forming a permanent Constitution and State Government and of admission as a State, by its delegates, into the Congress of the United States on an equal footing with the original States in all respects whatever, when it should have therein Sixty thousand free inhabitants: provided the Constitution and Government so to be formed should be Republican, and in conformity to the principles contained in the Articles of the said Ordinance.

[21] This draft, or copy, is in the writing of Martha Washington. The word in brackets is in the writing of Washington.

As proofs of the several requisites to entitle this territory south of the River Ohio to be admitted, as a State into the Union,[22] Governor Blount has transmitted a return of the enumeration of its Inhabitants, and a printed copy of the Constitution and form of Government on which they have agreed, which with his Letters accompanying the same, are herewith laid before Congress.[23]

To WILLIAM PEARCE

Philadelphia, April 10, 1796.

Mr. Pearce: Your letter of the 3d instant, with the Weekly reports, was received yesterday; and I have also seen Mr. Lear, who arrived here yesterday about the same time.

As there is no prospect from the last European accounts (down to the first of March) of Peace; but on the contrary, every appearance of a vigorous prosecution of the War, at least for another Campaign, and they speak (tho' flour is low in some parts) of a *general* scarcity, and rise of it in others; particularly in London: I am not under the smallest apprehension of getting fifteen dollars pr barrel for mine, even at a shorter credit than Six months; but as I wish to have it off my hands, as the warm weather is coming on, which may occasion it to sour, besides being liable to other accidents, I consent to your selling it to Mr. Smith for fifteen dollars on a credit of Six months; provided he will give a negociable note, with a good Endorser, on the Bank of Alexandria. But, as there will have been a lapse of time between the conversation you had with Mr. Smith's Clerk, and the receipt of this letter, it would be prudent, before you offer him the flour on the above terms, to sound, and to discover from him, whether he is still disposed

[22] Tennessee was admitted to the Union June 1, 1796.
[23] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

and authorised to make such a contract. and if he is, or if Mr. Smith himself shd be returned from New York (which I think highly probable) to see if you could not sell it to him at a shorter credit; but if you cannot, then, and in that case, to dispose of it at a credit of Six months for fifteen dollrs per barrel. get rid of the midlings and Ship stuff also, that the whole may be off your hands.

I am sorry to hear that the only rain (and that a light one) which you have had of late, should be attended with such high and destructive winds to your fences. I fear your Overseers do not see that the fences are well made, by their meeting with such frequent accidents. The winds have been very high here also, but the same disasters have not resulted from them.

You have either misunderstood me, or I must have expressed myself very odly about the Jacks, for I never had any idea of parting with more than one of them; and left, or intended to leave it, to you and Peter, to determine whether that one should be Compound, or the Knight of Malta; not intending to use the young Jack at all, this season; or if any, at least very sparingly. As the Season is now, or soon will be far spent, you had better part with neither; unless one of them is actually gone, or engaged to go to Mr. Lewis.

Keep a little good Hay for my horses, as I should prefer old to new for them, and may, tho' I do not expect it, be at Mt. Vernon before June.

I hope the Gardener tried the Graffs altho' the Season was late, as they were of a peculiar kind of Apple.

I wish the end may be better, than you represent the beginning, of your fishery to be; as continual bad seasons would be discouraging. I am Your friend[24]

[24] From the printed text in M. D. Conway's *George Washington and Mount Vernon*, Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4).

*To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Monday, April 11, 1796.

Dear Sir: Young Fayette and his friend are with me. Come and dine with them today at 3 Oclock if you are not otherwise engaged. Yours always.[25]

To GILBERT STUART

Monday Evening, April 11, 1796.

Sir: I am under promise to Mrs. Bingham[26] to sit for you to-morrow, at nine o'clock, and wishing to know if it be convenient to you that I should do so, and whether it shall be at your own house (as she talked of the State House), I send this note to ask information. I am, etc.[27]

To JOSEPH PRIESTLY

April 14, 1796.

The President [of the] US. has, agreeably to his promise, caused the Laws of the U States "to promote the progress of useful arts &c." to be examined and finds that the last act passed on this subject, vizt. on the 21st of Feby. 1793 (repealing the first act of the 10 of April 1790), confines the granting of patents to citizens of the United States. The first act of the 10 April 1790 does not appear to have limited this right to any particular description of persons, and why it is thus confined in the second, the President can, at this time, see no good reason; but he will take occasion to enquire into the cause of

[25] From a photostat of the original in the *McHenry Photostats* in the Library of Congress.

[26] Mrs. William Bingham (Ann Willing).

[27] The text is from George C. Mason's *Life and Works of Gilbert Stuart* (New York 1879), p. 88.

this limitation, and if it should not appear improper, to relinquish it, he can have no doubt of the disposition of the Legislature to make such alteration in the existing law as will give to the U S the advantage which may arise from the useful inventions or improvements of foreigners, as well as of our own Citizens.

*To PRESLEY NEVILLE[28]

Philadelphia, April 16, 1796.

Dear Sir: I have as you probably may have heard, sold my land on Millers run to Colo. Richie. This land was to be resurveyed; and to be paid for by the acre, agreeably to what it shall *actually* measure. This resurvey was to have been made by Mr. Charles Morgan, of whose death I have just heard, from Mr. Ross[29] (one of your Senators) who has advised me to commit this business to you.

May I then request the favor of you to make, or cause to be made by some accurate artist, this Survey, at as convenient a moment as it can be executed. The cost of the Survey, and incident expences I will pay or cause to be paid, upon demand.

The courses and distances of the tract (copied from the Patent) are enclosed; as also the quantity therein mentioned: but having good reasons to believe that the *real,* will exceed the *nominal* amount, I preferred selling by the former. I am etc.

To WILLIAM PEARCE

Philadelphia, April 17, 1796.

Mr. Pearce: Your letter of the 10th instt with a Postscript three days later, came to hand in due course of Post.

[28] Then living in Pittsburgh, Pa.
[29] James Ross, Senator from Pennsylvania.

I am sorry to hear that Maria continues unwell, and that Charles Washington[30] was siezed with a fever: Let them want for nothing, and whenever it is needful, get Doctr Craik to attend them.

It would be unlucky, as my crop of Wheat last year turned out but indifferently, and the prospect of a good one this year, bad; if I should have missed the best Market for flour. If there ever was *good* cause for flour's selling for fifteen dollars per barrel, hitherto; there is none, that I know of, for the fall in the price of this article now; for all accounts from Europe agree, that the Crops of Wheat are very short, and the apprehensions of the Want of bread, great. Under these circumstances I am at a loss to what to ascribe the reduced price, and therefore will keep mine up for the price mentioned in my last; until I have better evidence than appears to me at present, for this fall. but authorise you, as I did in my last, to take Mr. Smiths offer, if you cannot obtain better terms.

If a good occasion offers, I will make some enquiry of Mr. Christie into the character of Mr. Joseph Gallop, and his brothers; not that I expect there is any chance of agreeing with them; first, because I do not want the Land and Negros to go together. and 2dly because 2000 bushels of Wheat pr ann. for River farm is very little more for the land, Negros and Stock, than what I ask for the land alone; as there is 1207. acres within the present fences, of ploughable ground. I knew, that by fixing the Rent in Wheat (while it bore so high a price) would make it appear high; but I believe no reasonable person expects, when Peace is established, that it will, be more than a dollar. and if it was more, that the trouble or expence in raising it would be greater. Besides, as Wheat is a staple article, it will be the

[30] A slave.

standard or regulating price of other articles: and is equal and just, for both Landlord and Tenant; for otherwise, if instead of a bushel and half of Wheat pr acre, I was to set a dollar and half, and the former should rise, by degrees, to 25/; and other things (which I might have occasion to buy) in proportion; a money rent, under such circumstances, would be ruinous to *me;* on the other hand, if it was at £5. pr Bushel, the Rent (for the reason already mentioned, namely, that it costs the Tenant no more to raise it) would not be oppressive to him; and even if it were to be bot if the price of a Cow, a sheep, or a hog bore a proportionate price, the difficulty in paying for it would not be greater than if it was at 6/. and the price of other articles was governed thereby.

Are all the repairs to the Mansion and other houses completed? If the windows in the Corn and hay lofts, over the Stables, and on the back side, are not put in, I request they may be; as both lofts and Stables wants Air exceedingly.

If Mr. Robtt Lewis has not been to Mt Vernon, keep the enclosed until his arrival, but if he has been there and gone let it go to the Post Office. I am etc.[31]

To WILLIAM PEARCE

Philadelphia, April 24, 1796.

Mrs. Pearce: I am sorry to find by your letter of the 17th instant, accompanying the reports of the preceeding week, that the drought continued; and that the prospect for good crops of small grain was so unpromising. I should hope, however, that they cannot be so much injured yet, as not to be recovered by seasonable weather. If the grain stands sufficiently

[31] From the printed text in M. D. Conway's *George Washington and Mount Vernon,* Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4).

thick on the ground, I shall not regard the backwardness of it, occasioned by the want of rain; running much into straw is no service to the grain. I had flattered myself (until your letter was received) that the fine rain which fell in these parts on Saturday the 16th instant had extended to you. The alteration occasioned by it, both in grain and grass in the neighbourhood of this city, is very great indeed.

I wish, as your prospect for grain is discouraging, that it may, in a degree, be made up in a good fishing season for Herrings; that for Shad, must, I presume, be almost, if not quite over.

As I can see no permanent cause for the fall, in the price of flour, and believe it will rise again; I am not, at this time at least, disposed to take less for mine than has been mentioned in my former letters to you: but continue to advise me, always, of the Alexandria price of this article; that I may know better how to govern myself.

I expected Mr. Robert Lewis's collection would have amounted to more than £169.17.6 and the promised draught for forty pounds, which you had not, at the time of writing, received. This, and other money, except for current expences, had better be deposited in the Bank of Alexandria, as a place of security; and from whence it can be drawn when wanted.

Since the receipt of your letter of the 10th, I have seen Mr. Hughs, to whom Joseph Gallop and his brothers are tenants, on Spesusa Island. He speaks of them in favorable terms; as honest, industrious men, and good farmers. But it is somewhat extraordinary that the one who was with you, should entertain an idea of giving no more than 2000 bushels of Wheat as a rent for River farm, with all the Negros and Stock thereon; when, for 450 acres *only*, (about the half of Spesusa Island, for Mr. Hughs says they have no more ground tho'

they are allowed the use of the Marsh for their Cattle to run upon) they pay him annually 1200 bushels of Wheat and 1500 bushels of Indian Corn: and before these men had it, the same part rented for 30/. pr Acre. This, reckoning two bushels of Indian Corn for one of Wheat, makes 1950 bushels of the latter, or more than four bushels of it to the acre; without labourers, or stock of any kind furnished by him. It is true that the Land on the Island is good, and there is an advantage in the Marsh, as a range; but these are far short of compensating for the difference between Six pecks of wheat, which is all I ask as rent pr acre for mine, and 17⅓ pecks which (allowing 2 bushls of Corn for one of wheat) he gets for his. I fixed mine at a moderate rent because I wanted to induce good farmers to settle thereon—and would wish to see them thrive; which would enable them to do justice to, and improve the premises; which will be a primary object with me.

What prospect have you for fruit this year? Has it sustained any injury yet from the frosts? Have you altered the fields No. 2 and 3 at Dogue-run, agreeably to the line of stakes set up while I was last at home. Is your Lucern seed sown? and how does that, the Chiccory, and Clover seed come up.

I am glad to hear that Maria and Charles have got well again. I wish you health and am etc.[32]

*To BURWELL BASSETT

Philadelphia, April 24, 1796.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 17th. inst: was received yesterday. With you, I sincerely regret the death of your amiable

[32] From the printed text in M. D. Conway's *George Washington and Mount Vernon*, Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4).

Sister;[33] but as it is one of those events which is dispensed by an All-wise and uncontroulable Providence; and as I believe no person could be better prepared to meet it, it is the duty of her relatives to submit, with as little repining as the Sensibility of our Natures is capable of.

Mr. Lear is now in this City, and before the receipt of your letter we had had some conversation respecting the disposition of the children. At first, he seemed unwilling to part with any of them, but upon more mature reflection yielded to the propriety of your having Maria. And as he has engaged a tutor, and was on the point of taking his own Son[34] home, it was concluded that the boys should remain with him until my re-establishment (next March) at Mount Vernon; when some New arrangement might be made.

It was always my intention, as you probably may have understood, to take Fayette[35] under my immediate care, but as they are now bereft of father and mother it would be best, I conceive, and more grateful to *their* feelings to keep them together, in whatsoever situation they may be placed, for this reason as I have mentioned before, the ultimate decision relative to them may be postponed until I bid adieu to public life; when I will advise with you and Mr. Lear on their future destination and shall readily acquiesce in any plan which shall appear most conducive to their permanent interest, and advantage. With compliments to Mrs. Bassett and esteem and regard for yourself I am etc.

The Children at present are all at Mount Vernon.[36]

[33] Mrs. Tobias Lear.
[34] Benjamin Lincoln Lear.
[35] George Fayette, son of George Augustine Washington.
[36] From the original draft in the possession of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union.

*To GEORGE LEWIS

Philadelphia, April 28, 1796.

Dear Sir: Not knowing where to direct to your Brother Howell, I put my letter to him, under cover to you, and leave it open for your perusal. to be sealed before delivery.

I have not the least knowledge of Mrs. Dubarry, or the circumstance she relates, but, if her claim is just, I hope your Brother has more honor than to keep her out of it.[37]

Your letter of the 19th. has been duly received. I hope Mrs. Lewis's health is restored. My best wishes are offered for it in which your Aunt joins with Dear Sir Your etc. [H.S.P.]

To TOBIAS LEAR

Philadelphia, April 29, 1796.

My dear Sir: Yesterdays mail brought me letters which had arrived in the Commerce, Capt. Tuttell; enclosing invoice and Bill of lading for the long expected Seeds which by the by have cost me at least four times as much as I expected. The Invoice and bill of lading (lest difficulty or delay should arise from the want of them, on acct. of the duties) are now sent to you, with an earnest request that the packages may be forwarded without delay to Mr. Pearce, the Season for Sowing the peas and Succory being already far advanced. The winter Vetch cannot be sown 'till Autumn.

If you have a mind to try some of these seeds, at your place, you are very welcome to part of each kind. When the purposes for which Mr. Murrays letter Invoice and Bill of lading are

[37] On August 10 Bartholomew Dandridge wrote to Washington from Philadelphia, that he had seen Mrs. A. L. Dubarey, and paid her the $100 and taken her receipt in full, for "a Note of hand dated the 21st of March 1793 given by said Lewis to my former husband Mr. Chodkewiez." Dandridge's letter and receipt are in the *Washington Papers*.

sent, are answered, be so good as to return them to Dear Sir Your etc.

PS. If the seeds before the arrival of this should have been sent to Mt. Vernon, I pray you to contrive this letter to Mr. P.[38]

To CHARLES CARROLL, OF CARROLLTON

(Private)

Philadelphia, May 1, 1796.

Dear Sir: Your favor of the 23d. Ulto. has been duly received. With respect to the application of Mr. Freeman,[39] I shall do, as I always have done on similar occasions, and that I am sure you will approve of, namely to lay the recommendations of Applicants by, untill the hour comes when nominations are to be made, and then after reference to them; and an attention to other circumstances (which is often essential) prefer those who seem to have the greatest fitness for the Office.

Accompanying the information of the Election of Mr. Sprigg,[40] and the Instructions with which he was charged, you propound several interesting questions, such as I am persuaded your own good sense, after a resort to the debates of the important points which have been discussed, we leave you at no loss to Solve. Few however I believe acquainted with the proceedings in the House of Representatives, conceive that the *real* question was whether the Treaty with Great Britain was a *good* or *bad* one; but whether there should be a *Treaty at all* without the concurrence of that House, and taking advantage

[38] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[39] Thomas Freeman. He had applied for the appointment of surveyor to ascertain the western limits of the United States under the new treaties. His application, dated May 13, 1796, is in the *Applications for Office under Washington* in the Library of Congress.

[40] Thomas Sprigg, Representative from Maryland.

of the partialities in favor of one nation, and of the prejudicies against that of Another, with the aid of such unfavorable Interpretations, as they were disposed to give to some parts of the Treaty it was conceived, that no occasion more suitable might ever occur, to establish the principle and enlarge the power they aimed at. On this ground therefore it was resolved to attempt at *every* hazard to render the Treaty making power a nullity without their consent; nay worse, to make it an absolute absurdity, Such as could not fail to reflect disgrace upon the understanding and wisdom not only of those who framed, but on those also who adopted the constitution, from the inconsistency of giving a power to the president and Senate to make Treaties (and when made and ratified, declaring them to be the Supreme law of the land) and in the same instrument to vest a power in the house of Representatives to fix their Veto upon it, unless bribery and fraud was apparent in the transaction (which in equity annul any contract) or ruin was so self evident as to make war or any evil preferable to the Execution.

With respect to the motives wch. have led to these measures, and wch have not only brought the Constitution, to the brink of a precipice, but the peace happiness and prosperity of the Country, into eminent danger, I shall say nothing. charity tells us they ought to be good; but suspicions say they must be bad. At Present my tongue shall be silent.

Every true friend to this Country must *see* and *feel* that the policy of it is not to embroil ourselves, with any nation whatever; but to avoid their disputes and their politics; and if they will harrass one another, to avail ourselves of the neutral conduct we have adopted. Twenty years peace with such an increase of population and resources as we have a right to expect; added to our remote situation from the jarring power, will in all probability enable us in a just cause, to bid defiance to any

power on earth. Why then should we prematurely embarrass[41] (for the attainment of trifles comparatively speaking) in hostilities the issue of which is *never* certain, always expensive, and beneficial to a few only (the least deserving perhaps) whilst it must be distressing and ruinous to the great mass of our Citizens. But enough of this, the people must decide for themselves, and probably will do so notwithstanding, the vote has gone in favor of the appropriations by a majority of 51 to 48,[42] as the *principle* and *assumption of power* which has been contended for remain, although the Consequences by the present decision, probably will be avoided. With esteem etc.[43]

*To EDWARD CARRINGTON

(Private)

Philadelphia, May 1, 1796.

Dear Sir: With much pleasure I received your letter of the 22d. ulto.; and if the sense of the great body of Citizens in Virginia, should be expressed in the manner you seem to expect, it would give me, and I believe I might add, every friend to order and good government throughout the United States, very great satisfaction: More so than similar sentiments from any other State in the Union; for people living at a distance from it know not how to believe it possible, that its Representatives, both in the General and State Legislatures can speak a language which is repugnant to the Sense of their Constituents; especially too, as they seem to give the tone to all the States south of them.

Whatever my own opinion may be on this, or any other subject, interesting to the Community at large, it always has been,

[41] Embark ourselves(?).
[42] See note 13, page 12, *ante*.
[43] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

and will continue to be, my earnest desire to learn, and to comply, as far as is consistent, with the public sentiment; but it is on *great* occasions *only,* and after time has been given for cool and deliberate reflection, that the *real* voice of the people can be known.

The present, however, is one of those great occasions, than which, none more important has occurred, or probably may occur again to call forth their decision. And to them the appeal is now made. For no candid man in the least degree acquainted with the progress of this business, will believe for a moment that the *ostensible* dispute, was about papers, or that the British Treaty was a *good* one, or a *bad* one; but whether there *should be a Treaty at all* without the concurrence of the house of Representatives. which was striking at once, and boldly too, at the fundamental principles of the Constitution; and if it were established, would render the Treaty making Power not only a nullity, but such an absolute absurdity as to reflect disgrace on the framers of it: for will any one suppose, that they who framed, or those who adopted that Instrument, ever intended to give the power to the President and Senate to make Treaties (and declaring that when made and ratified, they should be the Supreme law of the land) wd. in the same breath place it in the powers of the house of Representatives to fix their Veto on them? unless apparent marks of fraud or corruption (which in equity would set aside any contract) accompanied the measure, or such striking evidence of National injury attended their adoption as to make a War, or any other evil preferable? Every unbiassed Mind will answer in the negative.

Whence the source, and what the object of all this struggle is, I submit to my fellow citizens. Charity would lead one to hope that the motives to it have been pure. Suspicions, how-

ever, speak a different language; and my tongue, for the present, shall be silent. Such further information on this head (or any other similarly important) which may come to your knowledge, and which your leisure and inclination may enable you to give, will be very acceptable to Dear Sir Your &c.

To WILLIAM PEARCE

Philadelphia, May 1, 1796.

Mr. Pearce: Your letter of the 24th ulto has been received, and I am sorry to find by it that the drought still continued with you. On this day week there was a very good rain here, and on Wednesday following a great deal fell; but the weather has been windy, cold and disagreeable ever since: notwithstanding which, the Grain and grass in these parts look extremely well.

I am glad to find that you were, at the date of your letter, so near the completion of Corn-planting; and hope, if you have had the late rains, that it will have come up well, for I think this happens best when it is planted dry, and rains come after.

I wrote you on friday last (and put the letter under cover to Mr. Lear) informing you, that the Seeds were arrived at last; at George Town: and expressing an earnest wish that the Peas and Chiccory might be got into the ground as soon as possible and that the Peas, as they were of two distinct sorts, might be seperately, and distinctly sown. I wished also, that the Chiccory might be sown as convenient to the Stables at the different farms, as fit ground could be obtained; as it was designed to be cut and fed green to the work horses. The Winter vetch must be carefully preserved till Autumn, as that is the season for sowing it.

I am sorry to find that flour continues to depreciate in price; but the present cause for this is, the dispute in the House of Representatives respecting the provisions for carry[ing] the British Treaty into effect; which has, for sometime past, occasioned a suspension in purchasing, shipping, and the Insurance of all sorts of property: but as the discussion is now brought to a close, it is to be hoped, and expected, that matters will recover their former tone again. At any rate, I will risque there getting worse, rather than take the present Alexandria price for my flour: but I repeat what I have said in former letters, that I will take 15 dollars, at 6 months credit.

By a letter which I received from Mr. Robt Lewis (dated in Alexandria, the 21st of last month) he informs me that he had left for, and on my acct., in the hands of Messrs Bennett & Watts, of that place, the Sum of Forty pounds; which it would be proper you should receive, and place it with the sum he paid into your own hands.

I am surprized to find by the Reports so few calves produced from my stock. Does it proceed from indifferent Bulls, or the Want of them. Be it either, or from any other cause, a remedy should be applied. And I wish the same with respect to the Rams, as the number of my Lambs are not equal to what they formerly were.

I would have you again stir up the pride of Cyrus; that he may be the fitter for my purposes against I come home; sometime before which (that is as soon as I shall be able to fix on the time) I will direct him to be taken into the house, and clothes to be made for him. In the meanwhile, get him a strong horn comb and direct him to keep his head well combed, that the hair, or wool may grow long. I wish you well and am Your etc.

P. S. By a Vessel which says she will sail from hence to Alexa on Wednesday next, I shall send two dozn Windsor Chairs which the Captn has promised to land as he passes Mount Vernon. Let them be put in the New Room.[44]

To THE SENATE

United States, May 5, 1796.

Gentlemen of the Senate: I lay before you, for your consideration and advice, an explanatory Article proposed to be added to the Treaty of Amity, Commerce, and Navigation between the United States and Great Britain; together with a copy of the full power to the Secretary of State to negotiate the same.[45]

To JOSEPH LEECH

United States, May 5, 1796.

Sir: I have received from you the address and resolutions of the inhabitants of the town of Newbern,[46] passed at their meeting on the 19th of April, noticing the call of the House of Representatives for the papers relating to the negociation of the treaty with Great-Britain, and my answer to that call.

A sacred regard to the constitution, and to the best interests of the United States as involved in its preservation, having governed my conduct on that occasion, the consciousness thereof would at all times have furnished me with strong ground of

[44] From the printed text in M. D. Conway's *George Washington and Mount Vernon*, Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4).

On May 2 Washington sent to the Senate the nomination of Jeremiah Wadsworth, as Commissioner to hold a treaty with the Cohnawaga Indians, styling themselves the seven nations of Canada, for the purpose of enabling the State of New York to extinguish, by purchase, the claim of said Indians to a parcel of land lying within the boundaries of said State. This message is entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*. The Senate confirmed the nomination May 4.

[45] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[46] North Carolina.

satisfaction: but it gives me real pleasure to find that conduct approved by my fellow-citizens; and the kind and affectionate terms in which the approbation of the inhabitants of Newbern has been conveyed to me, are peculiarly grateful, and demand my cordial acknowledgments. These I beg you to express to them, with my sincere thanks for their earnest wishes for my welfare.[47]

*To TOBIAS LEAR

Philadelphia, May 6, 1796.

Dear Sir: This letter will be put into your hands by Mr. Volney,[48] who proposes to visit the Federal City. If you are not acquainted with him personally, I am sure you must have a knowledge of his character, his travels and works; I therefore recommend him to your civilities while he remains in the Federal City. I am always and sincerely yours.

*To GOVERNOR JOHN JAY

Philadelphia, May 8, 1796.

My dear Sir: You judged very right when in your letter of the 18th Ulto. you observe, I "can have very little time for private letter-writing" but if my friends will put up with the hasty and indigested ones I can write under such circumstances, there are a few (among whom permit me the gratification to place you) with whom I should feel very happy to corrispond; and while I hold my present office, to learn their sentiments upon any of the important measures wch come before the Executive of the U. States.

[47] The draft is in the writing of Timothy Pickering. The date line is in the writing of Washington.

[48] C. F. C., Count Volney.

I am *Sure* the Mass of Citizens in these United States *mean well,* and I firmly believe they will always *act well,* whenever they can obtain a right understanding of matters; but in some parts of the Union, where the sentiments of their delegates and leaders are adverse to the Govent. and great pains are taken to inculcate a belief that their rights are assailed, and their liberties endangered, it is not easy to accomplish this; especially, as is the case invariably, when the Inventors, and abetters of pernicious measures use infinitely more industry in dissiminating the poison, than the well disposed part of the Community to furnish the antidote. To this source all our discontents may be traced and from it our embarrassments proceed. Hence serious misfortunes originating in misrepresentation frequently flow and spread before they can be dissipated by truth.

These things do, as you have supposed, fill my mind with much concern and with serious anxiety. Indeed, the trouble and perplexities which they occasion, added to the weight of years which have passed over me have worn away my mind more than my body; and renders ease and retirement indispensably necessary to both during the short time I have to stay here. It would be uncandid therefore and would discover a want of friendship and confidence (as you have expressed a solicitude for my at least, riding out the storm) not to add that nothing short of events, or such imperious circumstances (as I hope and trust will not happen) and might render a retreat dishonorable, will prevent the public annunciation of it in time to obviate a waste, or misapplication of votes at the Election of President and Vice-President of the United States in december next, upon myself.

I congratulate you on the tranquil Session, just closed in your State, and upon the good dispositions, generally, which I am informed prevail among the Citizens therein, with most friendly sentiments I remain &c.

*To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Sunday Afternoon, May 8,[49] 1796.

Dear Sir: The enclosed letter[50] presents a serious, perhaps a just view of the subject which has been under consideration; and as I wish in everything, particularly in matters of foreign relation, to conduct with caution; I request that your letter to the Govr. Genl. of Canada; the Instructions to Majr. Lewis;[51] and all your arrangements respecting the reception of the Posts, may accord with the ideas contained therein.[52]

Let the march of the Troops wch. are to take possession of the Posts be facilitated as much as possible; and let every measure necessary thereto for supplying them on the march, and when there, be concerted without delay. I am etc.

*To ALEXANDER HAMILTON

(Private and confidential)

Philadelphia, May 8, 1796.

My dear Sir: Your note of the 5th instant accompanying the information given to you by G.—— M——[53] on the 4th. of March, came safe on friday. The letter he refers to, as hav-

[49] Sparks prints this letter as dated May 9.

[50] From the Attorney General. It is not now found in the *Washington Papers*.

[51] There were three Captains Lewis in the United States Army at this date, but no Major Lewis.

[52] On this same day (May 8) McHenry submitted to the President, in accordance with the above, the draft of a letter to Lord Dorchester, Governor General of Canada, and also a draft of a private instruction to Lewis, whom McHenry calls Captain Lewis. McHenry's draft is in the *Washington Papers*.

[53] Gouverneur Morris. He had written (March 4): "A Fleet is to conduct to you the new french Minister, who will be directed to exact in the Space of fifteen Days a categorical Answer to certain Questions. What these are I can only conjecture but suppose that you will, in Effect, be called on to take Part decidedly with France. Mr. Munroe will no Doubt endeavor to convince the Rulers of that Country that such Conduct will force us into the War against them, but it is far from impossible that the usual Violence of their Councils will prevail." Morris's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

ing been written to me, is not yet received; but others from Mr. Monroe of similar complexion, and almost of as imperious a tone from that government, have got to hand.

That justice and policy should dictate the measures with which we are threatned, is not to be conceived; and one would think that even folly and madness on their part, would hardly go such lengths, without supposing a stimulus of a more serious nature than the Town meetings, and the partial resolutions which appeared in the course of last Summer and Autumn on ours. Yet, as it seems to be the Aera of strange vicissitudes, and unaccountable transactions; attended with a sort of irrisistable fatality in many of them, I shall not be surprized at any event that may happen, however extraordinary it may be; and therefore, it may not be amiss to ruminate upon the information which has been received in its fullest latitude; and be prepared to answer the demands on the extensive scale wch. has been mentioned.

What then do you think ought to be said in case G.—— M——s information should prove true, *in all its parts*? And what, if the proceedings, and Instructions of the French Directory should not exceed my conjecture, which is, that encouraged by the proceedings of last Summer on the Treaty (as already mentioned) and aided perhaps by communications of influential men in *this* country, thro' a medium which ought to have been the last to engage in it, that that government *may*, and I believe *will* send out an Envoy extraordinary, with Instructions to make strong remonstrances against the unfriendliness (as they will term it), and the tendency of our Treaty with Great Britain; accompanied probably, and expectedly, with discretionary powers to go farther, according to circumstances, and the existing state of matters when he shall have arrived here. Perhaps these Instructions may extend

to a releasement from that part of our Treaty with *them,* which claims exemption from the Seisure of Enemies goods in *our* Vessels. Perhaps, to demand the fulfilment of our guarantee of their West India Islds. as the most likely means of affording them relief, under the circumstances they labor at present. Perhaps too, to endeavor to render null and void our Treaty with G: Britain. Possibly *all of them,* or the dissolution of the Alliance. But I cannot bring my mind to believe that they seriously mean, or that they could accompany this Envoy with a Fleet, to *demand* the annihilation of the Treaty with G. Britain in fifteen days; or that War, in case of refusal, must follow as a consequence.

Were it not for the unhappy differences among ourselves, *my* answer wd. be short and decisive, to this effect. We are an Independent Nation, and act for ourselves. Having fulfilled, and being willing to fulfil, (as far as we are able) our engagements with other Nations, and having decided on, and strictly observed a Neutral conduct towards the Belligerent Powers, from an unwillingness to involve ourselves in War. We will not be dictated to by the Politics of any Nation under Heaven, farther than Treaties require of us.

Whether the *present,* or any circumstances should do more than *soften* this language, may merit consideration. But if we are to be told by a foreign Power (if our engagements with it are not infracted) what we *shall do,* and what we shall *not do,* we have Independence yet to seek, and have contended hitherto for very little.

If you have communicated this purport of G—— M——s letter to Mr. Jay, I wish you would lay this also before him, *in confidence,* and that you and he would be so good as to favor me with your sentiments, and opinions on both; and on the

measures which you think would be most advisable to be taken, in case we should have to encounter the difficulties with which we are threatened: which, assuredly, will have been brought on us by the misconduct of some of our own intemperate people; who seem to have preferred throwing themselves into the Arms of France (even under the present circumstances of that Country) to that manly, and Neutral conduct which is so essential, and would so well become us, as an Independent Nation.

Before I close this letter, I will mention another subject; which, tho' in a smaller degree, is nevertheless embarrassing. This also is communicated in confidence. It respects the wishes of young Fayette, relative to his father. As is very natural, and what might have been expected, he is extremely solicitous that something should be attempted to obtain the liberation of him; and has brought forward several plans (suggested by Doctr. Ballman;[54] who, it is to be feared will be found a troublesome guest among us) to effect it.

These will be better understood by the Enclosures now sent, than by any details I could give, when I add to them, the supposition of Fayette and Frestal, that the Doctor is without funds, and will be more embarrassing *to them* the longer he remains here. No mention, however, that has come to my knowledge of his going away.

The result of my reflection on this subject, and which I have communicated to the two young Men, is, that altho' I am convinced in my own mind that Mr. La Fayette will be held in confinement by the combined Powers until Peace is established; yet to satisfy them, and their friends of my disposition to facilitate their wishes, as far as it can be done with any

[54] Dr. J. Eric Bollman (Ballman).

propriety on my part; I would, *as a private person,* express in a letter to the Emperor,[55] my wish, and what I believe to be the wishes of this Country towards that Gentleman; viz, that the liberation of him, conditioned on his repairing hither, would be a grateful measure. That this letter I would put under cover to Mr. Pinckney, to be forwarded or not, according to the view he might have of its success; after conversing indirectly with the Diplomatic characters of the combined Powers in London. But that I could not, while in Public Office, have any Agency in, or even knowledge of, any projects that should require concealment, or that I should be unwilling to appear openly and avowedly in. That as Doctr. Ballman had committed an Act (however meritorious and pleasing it might be to the friends of Mr. de la Fayette) which was viewed in a very obnoxious light by the Power in whose possession the prisoner was. Had narrowly escaped condign punishment for it himself. And was released upon the express condition that he should never again appear in those Dominions; that I could neither shew him countenance, nor could I furnish him with money to extricate himself from difficulties (if he was in any). Seeing but little difference between giving before, or after, to a man who stands in the light he does between that Power and the Executive of the U States; but that, if he was disposed to quit the latter, I had no doubt, and he might be so assured, that the friends of Mr. de la Fayette would raise a sufficient sum to enable him to do this, and to defray his expences since he has been in this Country. What they will say to him, or he do in this matter, I know not.

If you and Mr. Jay see no impropriety in such a letter as I have mentioned, to be used at the discretion of Mr. Pinckney, I would thank either of you, for drafting it. Mr. Jay in particu-

[55] Of Germany.

lar having been in the habit, and better acquainted with the stile and manner of addressing these sort of characters than I am, would be able to give it a better shape. To return the papers now sent, with the draught required, as soon as convenient, would be acceptable to Dear Sir Your etc.[56]

To WILLIAM PEARCE

Philadelphia, May 8, 1796.

Mr. Pearce: I am glad to find by your letter of the first instant, that the rain wch fell here on the 27th ulto had extended to you. The cold and drying Winds I knew would deprive the plants of some of its good effects; but benefit must have resulted to them notwithstanding. If the frosts which accompanied those Winds have injured the fruit (as you fear) it will be a circumstance much to be regretd altho' not to be avoided.

I wish you had sowed all the Peas as soon as they were received (as the grd was prepared) altho' the season was far advanced, and the Books spoke of February as the proper period for depositing this Crop in the ground. They may not come up another year; but admitting they would do it, and it shall be found that they are A Crop worth cultivating, your prospect for getting into a good stock of seed would have been better by sowing the whole quantity, than an Acre only, and keeping the residue of the Seed until next Spring. Indeed, dry as the weather has been with you, it is a question whether sowing at the time you did was not better than to have done it a month sooner; especially as it is to be hoped that the fine rains which fell here on thursday night and all day friday were general. No alteration, or addition to what you have already done can take place after this letter gets to hand, with either Peas or Chiccory, as the Spring will be too far advanced.

[56] From a photostat of the original in the Princeton University Library.

If the clover seed which you sowed did not vegitate, and perish with the drought, it is to be hoped it may yet come to something. It will be unfortunate if it should not; more so on acct of the want of the Crop than on acct of the high price of the seed though both are bad enough.

Did you begin your lane at Dogue-run at the 2d gate, next the Overseers house, or at the outer gate, so as to extend it across the Meadow? The last if you had had time, would have been best on two accounts; first by throwing that meadow into two divisions, and 2dly by making both more secure; for the gates being often left open Hogs and other things are frequently getting in and doing injury; and besides, having space enough, the Carts are cutting different tracts which form new gullies; wch would not, nor cannot be the case in a lane.

Let me know the amount of your receipts for Fish sold. I do not want the particulars, but the aggregate sum of what they have fetched, or will fetch, when the money is all received.

If an acct was kept of the times my Coach Mares went to the Jack, particularly when those called Nancy and the blind Mare, were covered, let me know it in your next letter. The two whose names are mentioned I am pretty sure are with foal, and I want to know at what time it may be expected they will bring them, that I may regulate their movemts on the Road to Mount Vernon.

It is expected that Congress will rise between the 20th and last of this month. But admitting the fact, it is impossible for me, at this time, to say precisely when I shall be at Mount Vernon. I wish you well and am Your friend.

P. S. Mrs. Washington sends a memorandum enclosed which I pray you to have attention given to.[57]

[57] From the printed text in M. D. Conway's *George Washington and Mount Vernon*, Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4).

To THE EMPEROR OF GERMANY

Philadelphia, May 15, 1796.

It will readily occur to your Majesty, that occasions may sometimes exist, on which official considerations would constrain the Chief of a Nation to be silent and passive, in relation even to objects which affect his sensibility, and claim his interposition as a man. Finding myself precisely in this situation at present, I take the liberty of writing this *private* Letter to your Majesty; being persuaded, that my motives will also be my appology for it.

In common with the people of this Country, I retain a strong and cordial sense of the services rendered to them by the Marquis De la Fayette; and my friendship for him has been constant and sincere. It is natural, therefore, that I should sympathize with him and his family in their misfortunes, and endeavour to mitigate the calamities which they experience; among which his present confinement is not the least distressing.

I forbear to enlarge on this delicate subject. Permit me only to submit to your Majesty's consideration, whether his long imprisonment, and the confiscation of his Estate, and the Indigence and dispersion of his family, and the painful anxieties incident to all these circumstances, do not form an assemblage of sufferings, which recommend him to the mediation of *Humanity?* Allow me, Sir! on this occasion to be its organ; and to entreat that he may be permitted to come to this Country on such conditions and under such restrictions, as your Majesty may think it expedient to prescribe.

As it is a maxim with me not to ask what under similar circumstances, I would not grant, your Majesty will do me the justice to believe, that this request appears to me to correspond

with those great principles of magnanimity and wisdom, which form the Basis of sound Policy and durable Glory.

May the almighty and merciful Sovereign of the universe keep your Majesty under his protection and guidance.[58]

To WILLIAM PEARCE

Philadelphia, May 15, 1796.

Mr. Pearce: Your letter of the 8th, with the Reports, are at hand; and I am glad you sowed all the Peas (except the small reserve mentioned in your letter) and the Chiccory; as I think it better than withholding them, until next Seed time. I am glad also that you have got your flour off hand (as warm weather and accidents were against keeping it longer) altho' I am convinced that if I had held it up a month or two longer, I could have obtained a better price; or an any rate the same price on a much shorter credit. Deliver it as soon as possible for two reasons. first, to be exonerated from risque, by fire or otherwise; and 2dly that the day of payment may not be prolonged, by the detention of it in your possession.

I am sorry to hear you speak of no more than *showers* of Rain! On friday the 6th instant it rained here, and throughout the whole of this country, from before six in the morning, until after seven in the evening without ceasing; and in the best manner possible; and showers have fallen since. Such weather if it had extended to you although it has been a little cool, must have changed the face of everything with you; and would have brought on the Oats, Peas and grass seeds of all kinds, finely, as it has done here.

I do not, now, know where to advise you to get supplied with good Rams, unless Mr. Gough (near Baltimore) has them for

[58] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

sale. He imports both cattle and sheep, and is curious I am told in the Breed of them, and sells their descendants high. But this ought not to deter you from the purchase of (at least) one good Ram, to go to a score or more of your choicest ewes. from such an experiment and beginning, you might, by the year following, have Rams enough for the whole flock. This method I pursued some years ago to the very great advancement of my breed of sheep.

If Mr. Darnes is a man in whose integrity and activity full reliance can be placed, and he will agree to watch, diligently, in order to prevent the depredations which are aimed at my land on four mile run, I will give him a surety of living thereon Rent free during *his* life; and the priviledge of clearing a small, but defined quantity there-of: and an agreement conformably to these ideas, you may enter into with him as soon as you please; and the sooner the better.

To What height, has Davis raised the Walls of the Barn at River Farm? Does he raise the shed Walls at the same time? If not, the work will not appear so well united, even with pains and proper attention; and without them, they will have a disjointed look. Do you frame the inside upon the same plan as that of Union farm? I think I directed it to be done so, but cannot speak with certainty.

Let the house in the upper Garden, called the School house, be cleaned and got in order against I return; Glass put in the windows if wanted; and a lock on the door. I cannot yet say with certainty when I shall be able to visit Mount Vernon, but *hope* it will be by, or before the middle of June. Have good meats ready for us by that time; and tell the Gardener I shall expect an abundance of every thing in the Gardens; and to see every thing in prime order there, and in the Lawns. I am etc.

Paschal seems to be pretty regularly reported sick, Six days in the Week. What is the matter with him?[59]

*To ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Philadelphia, May 15, 1796.

My dear Sir: On this day week, I wrote you a letter on the subject of the information received from G—— M—— and put it with some other Papers respecting the case of Mr. De la Fayette, under cover to Mr. Jay: to whom also I had occasion to write. But in my hurry (making up the dispatches for the Post Office next morning) I forgot to give it a Superscription; of course it had to return from N: York for one, and to encounter all the delay occasioned thereby, before it could reach your hands.

Since then, I have been favored with your letter of the 10th. instt. and enclose (in its rough State) the paper mentioned therein,[60] with some alteration in the first page (since you saw it) relative to the reference at foot. Having no copy by me (except of the quoted part), nor the notes from wch. it was drawn, I beg leave to recommend the draught now sent, to your particular attention.

Even if you should think it best to throw the *whole* into a different form, let me request, notwithstanding, that my draught may be returned to me (along with yours) with such amendments and corrections, as to render it as perfect as the formation is susceptible of; curtailed, if too verbose; and relieved of

[59] From the printed text in M. D. Conway's *George Washington and Mount Vernon*, Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4).

[60] The Farewell Address. Hamilton's letter requested Washington to send him the "certain paper" in question. "As it is important that a thing of this kind should be done with great care and much at leisure touched and retouched, I submit a wish that as soon as you have given it the *body* you mean it to have, it may be sent to me." Hamilton's letter is in the New York Public Library.

all tautology, not necessary to enforce the ideas in the original or quoted part. My wish is, that the whole may appear in a plain stile; and be handed to the public in an honest; unaffected; simple garb.

It will be perceived from hence, that I am attached to the quotation. My reasons for it are, that as it is not only a fact that such an Address *was written,* and on the point of being published, but *known also to one or two* of those characters who are now strongest, and foremost in the opposition to the Government;[61] and consequently to the person Administering of it contrary to their views; the promulgation thereof, as an evidence that it was much against my inclination that I continued in Office, will cause it more readily to be believed, that I could have *no* view in extending the Powers of the Executive beyond the limits prescribed by the Constitution; and will serve to lessen, in the public estimation the pretensions of that Party to the patriotic zeal and watchfulness, on which they endeavor to build their own consequence at the expence of others, who have differed from them in sentiment. And besides, it may contribute to blunt, if it does not turn aside, some of the shafts which it may be presumed will be aimed at my annunciation of this event; among which, conviction of fallen popularity, and despair of being re-elected, will be levelled at me with dexterity and keenness.

Having struck out the reference to a *particular character* in the first page of the Address, I have less (if any) objection to expunging those words which are contained within parenthesis's in pages 5, 7 and 8 in the quoted part, and those in the

[61] Jefferson and Madison.

On May 14 Madison had written a long letter to Monroe in which he stated that it is now generally understood that the President will retire and that his successor lay between Jefferson "on one side Adams apparently on the other." The draft of this letter is in the *Madison Papers* in the Library of Congress.

18th page of what follows. Nor to discarding the egotisms (however just they may be) if you think them liable to fair criticism, and that they had better be omitted; notwithstanding some of them relate facts which are but little known to the Community.

My object has been, and must continue to be, to avoid personalities; allusions to particular measures, which may appear pointed; and to expressions which could not fail to draw upon me attacks which I should wish to avoid, and might not find agreeable to repel.

As there will be another Session of Congress before the Political existence of the *present* House of Representatives, or my own, will constitutionally expire, it was not my design to say a word to the Legislature on this subject; but to withhold the promulgation of my intention until the period, when it shall become indispensably necessary for the information of the Electors, previous to the Election (which, this year, will be delayed until the 7th of December). This makes it a little difficult, and uncertain what to say, so long beforehand, on the part marked with a pencil in the last paragraph of the 2d page.

All these ideas, and observations are confined, as you will readily perceive, to *my draft* of the valedictory Address. If you form one anew, it will, of course, assume such a shape as you may be disposed to give it, predicated upon the Sentiments contained in the enclosed Paper.

With respect to the Gentleman [62] you have mentioned as Successor to Mr P——[63] there can be no doubt of his abilities, nor in *my mind* is there any of his fitness. But you know as well as I, what has been said of his political sentiments, with respect to another form of Government; and from thence, can be at no

[62] Rufus King.
[63] Pickering.

loss to guess at the Interpretation which would be given to the nomination of him. However, the subject shall have due consideration; but a previous resignation would, in my opinion, carry with it too much the appearance of Concert; and would have a bad, rather than a good effect. Always, and sincerely I am yours.[64]

FAREWELL ADDRESS

[First Draft][65]

[May 15, 1796.]

Friends and Fellow Citizens:

The quotation in this Address was composed, and intended to have been published, in the year 1792; in time to have announced to the Electors of the President and Vice President of the United States, the determination of the former previous to the sd Election but the solicitude of my confidential friends[66] added to the peculiar situation of our foreign affairs at that epoch induced me to suspend the promulgation; lest among other reasons my retirement might be ascribed to political cowardice. In place thereof I resolved, if it should be the pleasure of my fellow citizens to honor me again with their suffrages, to devote such services as I could render, a year or two longer: trusting that within that period all impediments to an honorable retreat would be removed.

In this hope, as fondly entertained as it was conceived, I entered upon the execution of the duties of my second administration. But if the causes wch produced this postponement had any weight in them at that period it will readily be acknowledged that there has been no diminution in them since, until very lately, and it will serve to account for the delay wch

[64] From the *Hamilton Papers* in the Library of Congress.
[65] Inclosed in Washington's letter to Alexander Hamilton, May 15, 1796, *ante*.
[66] Madison's name was starred in at the bottom of the page and afterward erased.

has taken place in communicating the sentiments which were then committed to writing, and are now found in the following words.

"The period which will close the appointment with which my fellow citizens have honoured me, being not very distant, and the time actually arrived, at which their thoughts must be designating the citizen who is to administer the Executive Government of the United States during the ensuing term, it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should apprize such of my fellow citizens as may retain their partiality towards me, that I am not to be numbered among those out of whom a choice is to be made.

I beg them to be assured that the Resolution which dictates this intimation has not been taken without the strictest regard to the relation which as a dutiful citizen I bear to my country; and that in withdrawing that tender of my service, which silence in my situation might imply, I am not influenced by the smallest deficiency of zeal for its future interests, or of grateful respect for its past kindness: but by the fullest persuasion that such a step is compatible with both.

The impressions under which I entered on the present arduous trust were explained on the proper occasion. In discharge of this trust, I can only say that I have contributed towards the organization and administration of the Government the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. For any errors which may have flowed from this source, I feel all the regret which an anxiety for the public good can excite; not without the double consolation, however, arising from a consciousness of their being involuntary, and an experience of the candor which will interpret them. If there were any circumstances which could give value to my inferior qualifications for the trust, these circumstances must have been temporary. In

this light was the undertaking viewed when I ventured on it. Being, moreover still further advanced into the decline of life, I am every day more sensible that the increasing weight of years, renders the private walks of it in the shade of retirement, as necessary as they will be acceptable to me. May I be allowed to add, that it will be among the highest as well as the purest enjoyments that can sweeten the remnant of my days, to partake in a private station, in the midst of my fellow citizens, of that benign influence of good laws under a free Government, which has been the ultimate object of all my wishes, and in wch I confide as the happy reward of our cares and labours. [May I be allowed further to add as a consideration far more important, that an early example of rotation in an office of so high and delicate a nature, may equally accord with the republican spirit of our Constitution, and the ideas of liberty and safety entertained by the people.][67]

In contemplating the moment at which the curtain is to drop forever on the public scenes of my life, my sensations anticipate and do not permit me to suspend, the deep acknowledgments required by that debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country for the many honors it has conferred on me, for the distinguished confidence it has reposed in me, and for the opportunities I have thus enjoyed of testifying my inviolable attachment by the most steadfast services which my faculties could render. All the returns I have now to make will be in those vows which I shall carry with me to my retirement and to my grave, that Heaven may continue to favor the people of the United States with the choicest tokens of its beneficence; that their union and brotherly affection may be perpetual; that the free Constitution which is the work of their own hands,

[67] The brackets are so added by pencil, on the original, and are what Washington refers to as "parenthesis's" in his letter to Hamilton.

may be sacredly maintained; that its administration in every department, may be stamped with wisdom and with virtue; and that this character may be ensured to it, by that watchfulness over public servants and public measures, which on the one hand will be necessary, to prevent or correct a degeneracy; and that forbearance, on the other, from unfounded or indiscriminate jealousies which would deprive the public of the best services, by depriving a conscious integrity of one of the noblest incitements to perform them; that in fine the happiness of the people of America, under the auspices of liberty, may be made compleat, by so careful a preservation, and so prudent a use of this blessing, as will acquire them the glorious satisfaction of recommending it to the affection; the praise; and the adoption of every Nation which is yet a stranger to it.

And may we not dwell with well grounded hopes on this flattering prospect; when we reflect on the many ties by which the people of America are bound together, and the many proofs they have given of an enlightened judgment and a magnanimous patriotism.

We may all be considered as the Children of one common Country. We have all been embarked in one common cause. We have all had our share in common sufferings and common successes. The portion of the Earth allotted for the theatre of our fortunes, fulfils our most sanguine desires. All its essential interests are the same; while the diversities arising from climate, from soil, and from other local and lesser peculiarities, will naturally form a mutual relation of the parts, that may give the whole a more entire independence than has perhaps fallen to the lot of any other nation.

To confirm these motives to an affectionate and permanent Union, and to secure the great objects of it, we have established a common Government, which being free in its principles;

being founded in our own choice; being intended as the guardian of our common rights; and the patron of our common interests; and wisely containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, as experience may point out its errors, seems to promise every thing that can be expected from such an institution; [and if supported by wise Councils, by virtuous conduct, and by mutual and friendly allowances, must approach as near to perfection as any human work can aspire, and nearer than any which the annals of mankind have recorded.][68]

With these wishes and hopes I shall make my exist [*sic*] from civil life; and I have taken the same liberty of expressing them, which I formerly used in offering the sentiments which were suggested by my exit from military life. If, in either instance, I have presumed more than I ought, on the indulgence of my fellow citizens, they will be too generous to ascribe it to any other cause, than the extreme solicitude which I am bound to feel, and which I can never cease to feel for their liberty, their prosperity, and their happiness."[69]

Had the situation of our public affairs continued to wear the same aspect they assumed at the time the foregoing address was drawn I should not have taken the liberty of troubling you my fellow citizens, with any new sentiments or with a repition [*sic*], more in detail, of those which are therein contained; but considerable changes having taken place both at home and abroad, I shall ask your indulgence while I express with more lively sensibility, the following most ardent wishes of my heart.

That party disputes, among all the friends and lovers of their country may subside, or, as the wisdom of Providence has

[68] So bracketed in pencil by Washington. (See Washington's letter to Alexander Hamilton, May 15, 1796, *ante*.)

[69] Here ends the quoted part of the 1792 draft, which was a copy, almost verbatim, of Madison's suggested draft, the original of which is in the New York Public Library and the rough draft in the *Madison Papers* in the Library of Congress. Madison's inclosing letter to Washington, June 20, 1792, is also in the New York Public Library.

ordained that men, on the same subjects, shall not always think alike, that charity and benevolence when they happen to differ may so far shed their benign influence as to banish those invectives which proceed from illiberal prejudices and jealousy.

That as the allwise dispensor of human blessings has favored no Nation of the Earth with more abundant, and substantial means of happiness than United America, that we may not be so ungrateful to our Creator; so wanting to ourselves; and so regardless of Posterity, as to dash the cup of beneficence which is thus bountifully offered to our acceptance.

That we may fulfil with the greatest exactitude *all* our engagements: foreign and domestic, to the *utmost* of our abilities whensoever, and in whatsoever manner they are pledged: for in public, as in private life, I am persuaded that honesty will forever be found to be the best policy.

That we may avoid connecting ourselves with the Politics of any Nation, farther than shall be found necessary to regulate our own trade; in order that commerce may be placed upon a stable footing; our merchants know their rights; and the government the ground on which those rights are to be supported.

That every citizen would take pride in the name of an American, and act as if he felt the importance of the character by considering that we ourselves are now a distinct Nation the dignity of which will be absorbed if not annihilated, if we enlist ourselves (further than our obligations may require) under the banners of any other Nation whatsoever. And moreover, that we would guard against the Intriegues of *any* and *every* foreign Nation who shall endeavor to intermingle (however covertly and indirectly) in the internal concerns of our country; or who shall attempt to prescribe rules for our policy with any other power, if there be no infraction of our engagements with themselves, as one of the greatest evils that can befal us as a

people; for whatever may be their professions, be assured fellow Citizens and the event will (as it always has) invariably prove, that Nations as well as individuals, act for their own benefit, and not for the benefit of others, unless both interests happen to be assimilated (and when that is the case there requires no contract to bind them together). That all their interferences are calculated to promote the former; and in proportion as they succeed, will render us less independant. In a word, nothing is more certain than that, if we receive favors, we must grant favors; and it is not easy to decide beforehand under such circumstances as we are, on which side the balance will ultimately terminate; but easy indeed is it to foresee that it may involve us in disputes and finally in War, to fulfil political alliances. Whereas, if there be no engagements on our part, we shall be unembarrassed, and at liberty at all times, to act from circumstances, and the dictates of Justice, sound policy, and our essential Interests.

That we may be always prepared for War, but never unsheath the sword except in self defence so long as Justice and our *essential* rights, and national respectability can be preserved without it; for without the gift of prophecy, it may safely be pronounced, that if this country can remain in peace 20 years longer: and I devoutly pray that it may do so to the end of time; such in all probability will be its population, riches, and resources, when combined with its peculiarly happy and remote Situation from the other quarters of the globe, as to bid defiance, in a just cause, to any earthly power whatsoever.

That whensoever and so long as we profess to be Neutral, let our public conduct whatever our private affections may be, accord therewith; without suffering partialities on one hand, or prejudices on the other to controul our Actions. A contrary practice is not only incompatible with our declarations, but is

pregnant with mischief, embarrassing to the Administration, tending to divide us into parties, and ultimately productive of all those evils and horrors which proceed from faction, and above all,

That our Union may be as lasting as time; for while we are encircled in one band, we shall possess the strength of a Giant and there will be none who can make us affraid. Divide, and we shall become weak; a prey to foreign Intriegues and internal discord; and shall be as miserable and contemptible as we are now enviable and happy. And lastly:

That the several departments of Government may be preserved in their utmost Constitutional purity, without any attempt of one to encroach on the rights or privileges of another; that the Genl and State governmts may move in their propr Orbits; And that the authorities of our own constituting may be respected by ourselves as the most certain means of having them respected by foreigners.

In expressing these sentiments it will readily be perceived that I can have no other view now, whatever malevolence might have ascribed to it before, than such as result from a perfect conviction of the utility of the measure. If public servants, in the exercise of their official duties are found incompetent or pursuing wrong courses discontinue them. If they are guilty of mal-practices in office, let them be more ex[em]plarily punished; in both cases the Constitution and Laws have made provision, but do not withdraw your confidence from them, the best incentive to a faithful discharge of their duty, without just cause; nor infer, because measures of a complicated nature, which time, opportunity and close investigation alone can penetrate, and for these reasons are not easily comprehended by those who do not possess the means, that it necessarily follows they must be wrong; This would not only be doing injustice to

your Trustees, but be counteracting your own essential interests; rendering those Trustees (if not contemptible in the eyes of the world) little better at least than ciphers in the Administration of the government and the Constitution of your own chusing would reproach you for such conduct.

As this Address, Fellow citizens will be the last I shall ever make you, and as some of the Gazettes of the United States have teemed with all the Invective that disappointment, ignorance of facts, and malicious falsehoods could invent, to misrepresent my politics and affections; to wound my reputation and feelings; and to weaken, if not entirely destroy the confidence you had been pleased to repose in me; it might be expected at the parting scene of my public life that I should take some notice of such virulent abuse. But, as heretofore, I shall pass them over in utter silence; never having myself, nor by any other with my participation or knowledge, written, or published a scrap in answer to any of them. My politicks have been unconcealed; plain and direct. They will be found (so far as they relate to the Belligerent Powers) in the Proclamation of the 22d of April 1793; which, having met your approbation, and the confirmation of Congress, I have uniformly and steadily adhered to, uninfluenced by, and regardless of the complaints and attempts of *any of those* powers or their partisans to change them.

The Acts of my Administration are on Record. By these, which will not change with circumstances, nor admit of different interpretations, I expect to be judged. If they will not acquit me, in your estimation, it will be a source of regret; but I shall hope notwithstanding, as I did not seek the Office with which you have honored me, that charity may throw her mantle over my want of abilities to do better; that the gray hairs of a man who has, excepting the interval between the close of the Revolutionary War, and the organization of the new governmt.

either in a civil, or military character, spent five and forty years, *All the prime of his life,* in serving his country, be suffered to pass quietly to the grave; and that his errors, however numerous; if they are not criminal, may be consigned to the Tomb of oblivion, as he himself soon will be to the Mansions of Retirement.

To err, is the lot of humanity, and never for a moment, have I ever had the presumption to suppose that I had not a full proportion of it. Infallibility not being the attribute of Man, we ought to be cautious in censuring the opinions and conduct of one another. To avoid intentional error in my public conduct, has been my constant endeavor; and I set malice at defiance to charge me, justly, with the commission of a wilful one; or, with the neglect of any public duty, which, in my opinion ought to have been performed, since I have been in the Administration of the government. An Administration which I do not hesitate to pronounce, the infancy of the government, and all other circumstances considered, that has been as delicate, difficult, and trying as may occur again in any future period of our history. Through the whole of which I have to the best of my judgment, and with the best information and advice I could obtain, consulted the true and permanent interest of my country without regard to local considerations, to individuals, to parties, or to Nations.

To conclude, and I feel proud in having it in my power to do so with truth, that it was not from ambitious views; it was not from ignorance of the hazard to which I knew I was exposing my reputation; it was not from an expectation of pecuniary compensation, that I have yielded to the calls of my country; and that, if my country has derived no benefit from my services, my fortune, in a pecuniary point of view, has received no augmentation from my country. But in delivering this last

sentiment, let me be unequivocally understood as not intending to express any discontent on my part, or to imply any reproach on my country on that account. [The first wd be untrue; the other ungrateful. And no occasion more fit than the present may ever occur perhaps to declare, as I now do declare, that nothing but the principle upon which I set out, and from which I have, in no instance departed, not to receive more from the public than my expences, has restrained the bounty of several Legislatures at the close of the War with Great Britain from adding considerably to my pecuniary resources.][70] I retire from the Chair of government no otherwise benefitted in this particular than what you have all experienced from the increased value of property, flowing from the Peace and prosperity with which our country has been blessed amidst tumults which have harrassed and involved other countries in all the horrors of War. I leave you with undefiled hands, an uncorrupted heart, and with ardent vows to heaven for the welfare and happiness of that country in which I and my forefathers to the third or fourth progenitor drew our first breath.[71]

*To THOMAS PINCKNEY

(Private)

Philadelphia, May 22, 1796.

Dear Sir: To my letters of the 20th. of February and 5th. of March, I beg leave to refer you for the disclosure of my sentiments on the subjects there mentioned to you. Very soon afterwards, a long and animated discussion in the House of Representatives relative the Treaty of Amity, Commerce, and

[70] In the margin of this bracketed passage Washington wrote: "This may, or not, be omitted."

[71] From the printed text in Victor Hugo Paltsits's *Washington's Farewell Address* (New York Public Library: 1935). The original, entirely in the writing of Washington, is in the New York State Library.

Navigation with Great Britain, took place; and continued, in one shape or another, until the last of April; suspending, in a manner, all other business; and agitating the public mind in a higher degree than it has been at any period since the Revolution. And nothing, I believe, but the torrent of Petitions, and remonstrances which were pouring in from all the Eastern and middle States, and were beginning to come pretty strongly from that of Virginia, requiring the necessary provisions for carrying the Treaty into effect, would have produced a division (51 to 48) in favor of the appropriation.

But as the debates, which I presume will be sent to you from the Department of State, will give you a view of this business, more in detail than I am able to do, I shall refer you to them. The enclosed Speech, however, made by Mr. Aimes[72] at the close of the discussion, I send to you; because, in the opinion of most that heard it delivered, or have read it since, his reasoning is unanswerable.

The doubtful issue of the dispute, added to the *real* difficulty in finding a character to supply your place, at the Court of London, has occasioned a longer delay than may have been convenient or agreeable to you. But as Mr. King of the Senate (who it seems had resolved to quit his Seat at that board) has accepted the appointment,[73] and will embark as soon as matters can be arranged, you will soon be relieved.

In my letter of the 20th of Feby, I expressed in pretty strong terms, my sensibility on acct. of the situation of the Marquis De la Fayette. This is increased by the visible distress of his Son, who is now with me, and grieving for the unhappy fate of his parents. This circumstance, giving a poignancy to my own feelings on this occasion, has induced me to go a step further than I did in the letter above mentioned; as you will perceive

[72] Fisher Ames, Representative from Massachusetts.
[73] King was nominated May 19, and confirmed by the Senate May 20.

by the enclosed Address (a copy of which is also transmitted for your information) to the Emperor of Germany: to be forwarded by you in such a manner, and under such auspices as, in your judgment, shall be deemed best: or to arrest it, if from the evidence before you (derived from former attempts) it shall appear *clear,* that it would be of no avail to send it.

Before I close this letter, permit me to request the favor of you to embrace some favorable occasion to thank Lord Grenville, in my behalf, for his politeness in causing a special permit to be sent to Liverpool for the shipment of two sacks of the field Peas, and the like quantity of Winter Vetches, which I had requested our Consul at that place to send me, for Seed; but which it seems could not be done without an Order from government. A circumstance which did not occur to me, or I certainly should not have given it the trouble of issuing one, for such a trifle. With very great esteem &c.[74]

*To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, May 22, 1796.

Gentlemen: Your letters of the 13th and 14th. instant have been duly received, and the Attorney General of the United States having given his opinion relatively to the Powers of Attorney; And having pronounced the proceedings to be accordant with the Act for Guaranteeing the Loans; matters have been arranged with Mr. Gilmore for execution, and the Papers, agreeably to your desire, will be forwarded to Holland.

A duplicate of the Power of Attorney to Messrs. Wilhem and Jan Willink, is necessary to guard against the delay which would result from a miscarriage of the original. In short, as the

[74] From the Pinckney Family Deposit in the Library of Congress.

vigorous prosecution of the Works depend upon the facility with which the Loan is obtained, no risk that can be avoided ought to be left to chance: For fatal indeed would it be to the operations in the City if a disappointment, or any considerable delay should take place. And here let me add. If I had been called upon for an opinion relative to this loan before arrangements were made with Mr. Gilmore, I should, under my present view of the subject, have given a decided opinion against placing the *whole* of the sum, authorized to be borrowed in one year, upon this issue; if any part thereof could have been obtained in this country within, or not exceeding, the Provisions of the Law.

In all probability it will be *six months* before the result of the application in Holland will be known. This may, and from the peculiar state of things in that country 'tis not unlikely will be, unfavorable. What is to be done in that case? and what in the meantime? You have declared, yourselves, that you do not place much confidence in aids from Messrs. Morris and Nicholson, and point out no other specific resources. Notwithstanding these sentiments, I am unwilling to obstruct a measure which I presume you have considered in all its relations and chances, and have therefore given facility to your plan; wishing heartily that it may be attended with success.

The year 1800 is approaching by hasty strides; The friends of the City are extremely anxious to see the public works keep equal pace therewith. They are anxious too on another account, namely, that the Commissioners should *reside in the City* where the theatre of the business lies. This was, and is, my opinion. It is the principle, and was declared to be so at the time; upon which the present establishment of the Commissioners was formed; that, by being on the spot, and giving close attention to the operations, they might prevent abuses, or cor-

rect them in embryo. It is said, if this had been the case, those defective walls, which to put up, and pull down, have cost the public much time, labour and expence, would never have been a subject of reproach. For these, and other reasons which might be added, it is my decided opinion and expectation that the Commissioners do reside *in the City*. And the nearer they are to the public Works the better, and more desirable it will be. I wish this as well on their own account, as on that of the public; because they would have it much more in their power to scrutinize all the movements of men and measures which are under their controul, than it is possible to do at the distance of two or three miles and periodical, or occasional visits. Being on the spot, and seeing everything that occurs, they would be better enabled to systematize the business, and have it conducted with greater œconomy; and finally, would insure to themselves those honors and consolations which flow from the punctual discharge of public trust.

I have sent your advertisement of the sale of Lotts, to the places you have requested; but I beg that it may be unequivocally understood that, I am opposed to the sale of them in large parcels, to Speculators. It might be asked, if this was to happen, and with propriety too, why give these people the profit arising between the wholesale and retail prices, when, if the same means and industry in the disposal, were used by the Commissioners, it would be saved to the public? To sell by single Lots, or at most squares, on moderate terms to those who will improve them, appear most eligable to me. particular cases *may* arise, to render a departure from this rule necessary, but such cases must speak for themselves, and the advantages to be derived from them must be evident.

If there are any matters which you are desirous of laying before me, let me request that they may be prepared (if a decision

is not required sooner) by the time I shall pass through the City; which is as likely to happen about the middle of next month, as at any period I can name at present. My stay at Mount Vernon cannot be long, and I shall have many matters of private concern to attend to while there. With great esteem etc.[75]

To WILLIAM PEARCE

Philadelphia, May 22, 1796.

Mr. Pearce: Your letter of the 15th instt, enclosing the Reports of the preceeding Week, came duly to hand.

I am glad to hear that the weather has been seasonable of late; but sorry indeed, to find by your letter that the grain and grass has received so little benefit from the rains which have fallen, here, in great abundance. And it is peculiarly unfortunate after giving so high a price for Clover Seed, that it should either not have come up, or been destroyed afterwards, by the droughts. Has your Corn come up well, and how does it thrive? And how does the Oats, Peas, Chicory, and other things which have been sown, and planted this Spring come on?

It is much to be regretted, and I do regret exceedingly, that the Honey locusts which have been set out, should have perished. It would seem I think as if I never should get forward in my plan of hedging. With respect to the transplanting of Cedar (or any other evergreen) I am persuaded there is no other sure way of getting them to live, than by taking them up in the winter with a block of frozen earth around the Roots (and as large as it can conveniently be obtained, proportioned to the size of the plant). This not only gives them their mother earth, but by its adhesion to the principal roots, it nourishes

[75] From *Letters from the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

the body until the fibres from the former shoot sufficiently to secure the vegitation and thriftines of the plant. I transplanted thousands of Pine and Cedar without getting scarcely one to live until I adopted the above method; after which, so long as it was practised, I never lost one. Witness the pine groves by the Gardens; both of which were planted in this manner, and to the best of my recollection not one of them died: whereas, out of the first planting, just as they now are, not more than two or three of them lived.

I am very sorry indeed to hear of the damage which the family piece of the Marquis de la Fayette has sustained. and am unable to account for it.[76] If the window shutters had been left open, I should have attributed it more to the sun, than to the dryness of the Air.

Ask Peter, if some of the Mares wch I took down with me, when I went alone to Mount Vernon in April of last year, did not go to the Jack at that time? If they did not, their foaling will be much about the time I shall be on the Road which will be unfortunate.

For what purpose is the Well house from the Mansion, carried to Union Farm? Save a plenty of the best Hay of last year for my horses, as I had rather they should be fed upon old, than the Hay of this season, when I come home. I am Your friend.[77]

To THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

United States, May 25, 1796.

Gentlemen of the Senate and of the House of Representatives: The measures, now in operation for taking possession of

[76] The "family piece" was, probably, portrait group of the Lafayettes, noted in the inventory taken after Washington's death as being in the front parlor.

[77] From the printed text in M. D. Conway's *George Washington and Mount Vernon*, Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4).

the posts of Detroit and Michilimackinac, render it proper, that provision should be made for extending to these places and any others alike circumstanced, the civil authority of the north western territory. To do this will require an expence, to defray which the ordinary salaries of the Governor and Secretary of that territory appear to be incompetent. The forming of a new County or new Counties and the appointment of the various Officers, which the just exercise of Government must require, will oblige the Governor and Secretary to visit those places and to spend considerable time in making the arrangements necessary for introducing and establishing the Government of the United States. Congress will consider what provision will in this case be proper.[78]

*To GUSTAVUS SCOTT

Philadelphia, May 25, 1796.

Sir: Your favor of the 20th. inst: came to hand yesterday.

I have neither received, nor heard of an Address from the Proprietors of the Federal City. Nor do I know any more of Mr. Law's sentiments relative to the concerns of it, that I do of Tippo Saib's. The ideas conveyed in my last to the Commissioners (dated the 22d) are not of recent adoption. They are as old as the change which took place in the establishment of the Commissioners; and were the cause of that change. A combination of causes have brought them more actively, and pointedly, into view than heretofore: among which, and not the least to be regarded, are the remarks which were made during the discussion of the Guarantee Bill, even by its friends (not so much in, as out of the house); the indispensable necessity for

[78] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

close attention, and great exertion in all those to whom the business is entrusted; with an eye to the strictest economy under the best systems that can be formed.

You cannot, I am persuaded, be entirely unacquainted with the remarks which have been made on the want of œconmy, and due attendance to the operations which are carrying on by those who are entrusted with the management of them. Nor, acquainted as *you are* with the jealousies, and contracted views of the Proprietors, can the utmost circumspection, and the minutest attentions in the Commissionrs. to all the wheels that are in motion, and to all the persons who move them, appear unimportant. Consequently, wherever the scene of business is, there also should be the principal actors. And till this happens, the Jealousies between the upper and lower end of the City will not subside, nor will the injurious consequences flowing from them, cease. Nor indeed will it be believed, be the fact as it may, that while the Commissioners, or the major part of them (with the subordinate Agents) reside in George Town, that the concerns of the City will be conducted uninfluenced, and to the best advantage. We may dispise public opinion, and these kind of reports as we please, but they are not less injurious on that account. The time is very short in which a great deal for the reception of Congress is to be done; and no means, or exertion should be wanting to accomplish it. It would be ineligable, and highly impolitic to bring any new proposition before Congress, before the Government is fixed there.

I do not precisely know what the late Secretary of State may have written with respect to the alternative allowed the Commrs. to reside in the City, or *George Town*. But it is a fact known to everyone who ever heard me express a sentiment on the subject, that it has been decidedly in favor of the former;

and that nothing but necessity, arising from the want of accommodation, could justify the latter. Nay more, it is known to the first Commissioners, that I not only coincided in opinion with them, that a house, situated between the two principal buildings should be built for their accommodation, but actually approved a plan for the purpose. Why it was laid aside, unless their going out of Office or the want of funds was the cause I am unable to say.

I have been thus particular, that you may see what my opinion *uniformly* has been; that it has not proceeded from any recent movements in the City (which were unknown to me, before your letter came to hand), and that it has appeared more necessary and has been more pointedly mentioned, since I find that the *friends* of the City, and I presume the Community at large, conceive (as I have always done) that the measures which have been suggested, are useful and proper.

With esteem etc.[79]

To THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

United States, May 28, 1796.

Gentlemen of the Senate and of the House of Representatives: The extraordinary expences to be incurred in the present year in supporting our foreign intercourse, I find will require a provision beyond the ordinary appropriation and the additional twenty thousand dollars lately granted.

I have directed an estimate to be made,[80] which is sent herewith and will exhibit the deficiency for which an appropriation appears to be necessary.[81]

[79] From *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.
[80] The estimate is entered in the "Letter Book" immediately following this message.
[81] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To WILLIAM PEARCE

Philadelphia, May 29, 1796.

Mr. Pearce: No Mail beyond Baltimore (Southerly) was received at the Post Office in this City yesterday; consequently, I got no letter from you; what may have been the cause I know not, unless the considerable falls of rain which happened here during last week, may have rendered the waters between Alexandria and Baltimore (if they extended so far) impassible.

You have never mentioned in any of your late letters, nor has it occurred, at the time of writing mine, to ask, whether a Pipe of Wine, and box of Tea, which was sent from this place for Mount Vernon, had arrived, and in what condition. It was in March, or the beginning of April they left this, And another Vessel with Windsor Chairs and sundry other articles for the same place, have been gone from hence long enough to have heard of their arrival 'ere this. These occurrences ought always to be noticed in your letters, to relieve one from the suspence which otherwise follows. Before we leave this, we shall send several other matters round, but whenever they are shipped you shall have notice thereof that they may be taken from Alexandria so soon as they arrive there; at which time procure a groce of good Porter to be taken down along with them. In the mean time, have a few Bottles of Porter there, and some wine for particular company, who may be *particularly* recommended to you by myself: among these Mr. Aimes, a respectable member of Congress (travelling for his health) will, I expect, be one; as he proposes to set out from hence for the Federal City about the middle of this week, and is one I wish to be well treated, while he stays. I have requested Mr. Lear to shew him the way down to Mount Vernon.

Is Maria and the two boys[82] at that place now, or where are they? No mention has been made of them for some time. When (from present appearances) will your early Wheat be ready to cut? and how does that, and the other small grain, Peas, and grasses come on? What was done with the Seed saved from the India Hemp last summer? It ought, *all* of it, to have been sown again; that not only a stock of seed sufficient for my own purposes might have been raised, but to have dissiminated the seed to others; as it is more valuable than the common Hemp.

Congress talk of rising about the middle of this week; but there is no dependance on it. In about ten or twelve days after the Session closes, it is likely I shall commence my journey homewards: as soon as I can fix the day, I will advise you of it.

I have several times spoke concerning a necessary for the Quarter People, at Mansion house; and once or twice shewed Thomas Green the precise spot to place it, viz, in the drain that leads from the old brick kiln back of the Well, towards the gully leading towards the gate; that, having this advantage the offensive matter might be washed off by the Rain water that collects in the gutter. I wish you would have this done before I come home that the yard of the Quarter may be always clean and Sweet. If the old necessary on the brow of the Hill can be moved with more ease than building a new one, let it be done, as it is not only useless where it is, but is an eyesore. Order the other two to be well cleaned and kept in good order. During my stay at Mount Vernon I expect much company there, and of the most respectable sort, it would be pleasing to us therefore to find everything in nice order. I wish you well and am your friend[83]

[82] Children of Francis Bassett Washington.

[83] From the printed text in M. D. Conway's *George Washington and Mount Vernon*, Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4).

*To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, May 30, 1796.

Gentlemen: As no Mail southward of Baltimore was received at the Post Office in this City on Saturday; and as you may not have understood by my letter of the 22d. instt, that the duplicate of the Power of Attorney to Messrs. Wilhem and Jan Willink was required to be forwarded *through me,* I address this to you, in order to remove the doubt if any there be; as copies of the other papers are ready, and only waiting *your* duplicates, to be dispatched.

In consequence of your recommendation of Mr. Freeman,[84] he was nominated, and by the advice and consent of the Senate has been appointed, Surveyor for running the Territorial line between the United States and Spain, at the rate of (I believe of 1500$) dollars pr. annum.

This service cannot commence before the Ratification of the Treaty by Spain, is received; and the Commissioner and Surveyor on the part of that Power are known, and ready to proceed. It will not therefore interfere with any Services *you* may require, and *Mr. Freeman* can render, until he is called upon to execute this business; which, probably, will not be before Autumn. At which time the Commissions will issue.

His request was to be employed in settling the Northern boundary between the United States and Great Britain, but the appointment of the Surveyors for that purpose is left to the Commissioners, who are to decide ultimately; I did not incline therefore to bring forward the name of any one for this service, even to our own Commissioners. With esteem. etc.[85]

[84] Thomas Freeman.

[85] From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

*To FISHER AMES

Tuesday, May 31, 1796.

Dear Sir: As it may not be convenient for you to call upon me before your departure for the Federal City, and if it was, I might be otherwise engaged at the moment; I hand you the enclosed letters: not meaning by doing so, to avoid the pleasure of seeing you before you set out. and then, as now, to wish you an agreeable journey, and the perfect restoration of your health; being with very great esteem Dear Sir Your etc.

PS. If you do not leave the City before Thursday, let me ask the favor of your company at Dinner that day, 4 Oclock.[86]

[N.Y.P.L.]

*To TOBIAS LEAR

Philadelphia, June 3, 1796.

My dear Sir: Your letter of the 30th. Ulto. was received yesterday. As I expect (nothing new and unforeseen happening to prevent it) to commence my journey for Mount Vernon in ten or twelve days, I shall enter into no details respecting any of the matters touched upon in your letter of the above date.

The chief design of my writing to you by this Post, is to inform you that your good Mother, and lovely son, arrived in this City on Tuesday evening; and left it yesterday about ten oclock on their way to the Federal City. Mrs. Lear is very well, and Lincoln as sprightly as ever; but both disappointed at not meeting you here.

It was with great difficulty a Carriage could be procured to take her on; for it so happened, that Congress closed their Session yesterday, that the members were struggling for, and bid-

[86] The original is owned by Herbert Ten Broeck Jacquelin, of New York City. The above text is from a photostat.

ding on each other for conveyances, and your Mother's anxious desire to get to you, would not permit her to wait. At length, after some unavailing attempts, Mr. Craik succeeded in getting a Carriage and pair of horses, which I hope will take her safe down.

I will send sugar, and some other things from hence. We are all as well as usual, and join in best wishes for you. With sincere esteem etc.

PS. A Mr. Prescot attends Mrs. Lear and Lincoln. And it is not unlikely, as the weather is cool, but that they may be with you as soon as this letter as the Post does not travel on Sunday.

I did not know until after the Post had left the City on Wednesday, that Mrs. Lear was in it, or expected; or you should have been advised of the circumstance by the Mail of that day.

[H.L.]

To ALEXANDER WHITE

(Private)

Philadelphia, June 5, 1796.

Dear Sir: Your Letter of the 25th. Ultimo from Martinsburgh, did, as you expected, come to my hands on the 3d. instant; but not untill the Mail of that day was dispatched; consequently, the Post of tomorrow will be the first, by which I can reply to the contents of it. I wish, *very much indeed,* that you could make it convenient, and agreeable to yourself, family, and business, to remain in the City Commission; and that you would prosecute to the end, the good work you have

On June 4 Washington returned an information of the Secretary of the Treasury which the Secretary of War sent to the President, with the following note: "Return the enclosed as soon as Mr. Ross (under strong injunctions) have read it. Never put papers, improper to be seen, under a cover sealed with a Wafer. At any time, but especially when wet, the contents may be seen and the cover closed again without suspicion, or appearance of being opened." This note is in the *McHenry Photostats* in the Library of Congress.

begun. I sincerely believe that this is the wish of *all* who know you, and are true friends to that place; and very sorry indeed should I be, if the absence, and attention necessary for your private concerns (which your Letter does not sufficiently define, to enable me to form a correct judgment) should be found incompatible with the duties which are expected from the Commissioners.

It is unnecessary, I am sure, for me [to remark to you (on general ground, and reasoning) the necessity there is for the closest attention and the most vigorous exertion of the Commissioners to push this work on; But, independent of *general* considerations, a particular occurrence has happened lately wch. makes me more than ever wish you to devote as much time as possible to this business. It is this.

It is not entirely unknown to you, I believe, that I have been hinting in pretty broad terms to your Colleagues, that I did not conceive that the trust reposed in them could be satisfactorily executed while they remained at a distance from the scene of action, and held periodical meetings only; and that where there was inattention or remissness in the head, it would be found to extend itself to all the Members. Not perceiving that these hints had all the effects that was intended. Finding, from the discussion of the Guarantee Bill in Congress that serious charges were laid against the œconomy in carrying on the business; knowing that there was no way so effectual to prevent, or to correct, errors while they were in embryo as a close inspection into them while they were in a progressive state; and no measure so likely to remove jealousies as a residence of the Commissioners *in the City,* I did on the 22d. Ulto. when acknowledging the receipt of their Letters of the 13th. and 14th. relative to the loan in Holland, give it as my decided opinion to that Board, that this event, for the reasons I assigned, ought to take

place; and the nearer they could fix, conveniently, to the principal theatres, the more agreeable it would be.

Thus much happened before I received any advice of what was transacting in the City; but on the 1st. instant was handed to me an Address from the Proprietors thereof, dated the 24th. preceeding, requesting me to *do* what I had actually *done,* and which I find is not at all pleasing to Mr. Scott. How it may be to Doctor Thornton I know not, having heard nothing from *him* on the Subject.

I have given you these details (in a private letter) that you may see at one view what my situation and wishes are; and the necessity there is for my preserving consistency, at least in a degree. I shall touch upon no other parts of your letter, at this time; but that you may have a dble. chance of receiving these sentiments soon, this letter shall be forwarded to Winchester, and a duplicate lodged in the Post Office in Washington, that if you miss the first, the other may be found there on your arrival.

On other subjects I will converse with you when we meet in the Federal City, where it is probable I shall be about the 16th instant, if nothing (at present unforeseen) happens to prevent it.

With sincere esteeem etc.][87]

*To BARTHOLOMEW DANDRIDGE

Philadelphia, June 5, 1796.

Dear Sir: The letter you left with Mr. Kitt, the one you wrote from Martinsburgh and another from Greenbriar Court house dated the 10th. Ulto. have all been recd.

[87] The first part of this draft is in *District of Columbia Letters and Papers;* the last part in the *Washington Papers.* The part within the brackets is in the writing of Washington; the other is in an unidentified writing.

It can excite no [illegible] the manner, and other circumstances attending your departure from this place, was not more displeasing than it was surprising: not only to me, but to every one else; and opened the door for variety of conjecture; some of them you may be sure not favorable; and more or less according to the knowledge People had of you. All this is natural, and what you must have made your mind up for.

For myself, as I always entertained a good opinion of your honor and honesty, vexation at being left in the manner I was in the midst of busy, and perplexing business, without a moments intimation of the event, or knowing where to apply for aid was all that inclined to put the business into your hands, and allow you the profits arising from the management thereof, allowing a Commission upon the Sales, which is to embrace the expence of laying off the Lots. Yourself, which you may soon learn to do [illegible] you remain in the mind you were at the date of your letter of the 10th. Ulto; which did not get to my hands until the 3d. instant, it will be necessary for me to see, or at least to have a direct communication opened with you, on the first of September, that the business may be fully arranged, and a plan devised for the prosecution of it.

On Monday the 13th. I expect to leave this City for Mount Vernon; but as [illegible] to meet the offers which may be made me, as to attend to the business of the Public (from which I cannot be absent longer) it is my intention to return to this place again (alone) before the day above mentioned. By, or before which give me all the information you can, in writing, if I shd. not see you, of the value of my lands, or rather, from what you can collect from others, what they would sell for, divided into any sized lots to suit the purchasers.

Your Aunt and Washington join me in affectionate regard for you, and I am etc.

PS. As it may be of Service to you, and others also, I enclose a print of my Advertisement. [N.Y.P.L.]

To WILLIAM PEARCE

Philadelphia, June 5, 1796.

Mr. Pearce: Since my last I have received your letters of the 22d and 29th of last month. The first came to hand on Tuesday, the other on Saturday, as usual.

On Wednesday last Congress closed their Session; but there is yet a good deal for me to do, before I can leave the Seat of the Government. My present expectation however is, that I shall be able to do this on tomorrow week: but as this is not certain, and as I shall travel slow, to avoid what usually happens to me at this season, that is, killing, or knocking up a horse; and as we shall, moreover, stay a day or two at the Federal City, it is not likely we shall arrive at Mount Vernon before the 20th, or 21st of this month.

In a few days after *we* get there, we shall be visited, I expect, by characters of distinction; I could wish therefore that the Gardens, Lawns, and every thing else, in, and about the Houses, may be got in clean and nice order. If the Gardener needs aid, to accomplish as much of this as lyes within his line, let him have it; and let others rake, and scrape up all the trash, of every sort and kind about the houses, and in holes and corners, and throw it (all I mean that will make dung) into the Stercorary and the rest into the gullied parts of the road, coming up to the House. And as the front gate of the Lawn (by the Ivies) is racked, and scarcely to be opened, I wish you would order a new one (like the old one) to be immediately made, and that, with the new ones you have just got made, and all the boarding of every kind that was white before, to be painted white again. If Neal and my own people cannot make the front gate, above

mentioned, get some one from Alexandria to do it, provided he will set about and finish it immediately. This must be the way up to the House.

Let the Rooms in the Servants Hall, above and below, be well cleaned; and have the Beds and bedsteads therein put in order; after which have a good lock put on the door of the west room, above, and order Caroline, or whoever has the charge of those rooms, to suffer no person to sleep, or even to go into it, without express orders from her Mistress or myself. Let exactly the same things be done with the Rooms over the Kitchen; as there will be a white Cook with us that will require one of them; and the other may also be wanted for some other Servants, or use. it being likely, there will be a call for all these places and things. And I hope, especially as there is no Ice to keep fresh meats, that you will have an abundant supply for the demands that will probably be made thereon during our stay at home. And besides, will ascertain from the Butcher in Alexandria, the stated days on which Beef and Veal are killed, that we may know what dependence to place on him. Tell the Gardener, I shall expect everything that a Garden ought to produce, in the most ample manner.

There may be many other things necessary to be done, as well for appearance as use, that do not occur to me at this momt but as you can judge from what I have said, what my wishes are, I have no doubt but that you will contribute all you can to accomplish them; and give the *whole* as neat, and clean an appearance as they are capable of.

About the time you were employing a Joiner to do the North end of the House, I directed Venetian blinds to be made, and painted green, for all the windows on the West side of the House; and mentioned the manner in wch I thought it best to execute them: but have never been informed what, or whether

any thing has been done in consequence of it. The omitting to give information of what *has,* or what *cannot* be done in consequence of such requests, often throws me into a disagreeable suspence, and frequently occasions me to write often on the same subjects. I am equally ignorant whether the dormant windows are yet put into the stable, and Corn lofts; both of which, for the purpose of Air, is indispensably necessary; besides adding to the appearance of the building.

Take care to keep a sufficiency of Oats, and the best of your old Hay on hand. I shall have eight or ten horses of my own *with me,* and there will be *many others* with Visitors.

You had better, I conceive, get the Midlings and Ship-stuff off your hands at what they will fetch; as the weather is getting warm, and the flour may turn Sower. Unless you want the money for current expences, it might be sold on such a credit as to receive payment on the same day your demand upon Smith, for the other flour, will become due: so as to have the whole at once. This credit may enhance the price, and will be (if the money is not wanted for the purposes before mentioned) no disadvantage to me in giving it.

I hope, at your last shearing, there was a complete cull, and seperation of all the old, scabby and disordered Sheep. I do not know how to account for the weekly loss you sustain, in this species of Stock, unless it be by keeping such poor and diseased sheep in the flocks as contaminate others.

I have no doubt but that you will endeavor so to arrange matters, as to keep your grain, and Hay harvests from interfering as much as possible with each other; and this too without either suffering, by standing too long, if it can possibly be avoided. Begin the former as soon as it can be cut without loss.

If Miss Nelly Custis should apply to you for a Cart to Transport her Trunk and other things from Doctor Stuarts to Mount

Vernon, let it be sent as soon as applied for, and something to cover and secure the contents against Rain, in case any should fall while they are on the Road.

I perceive Mrs. Washington's Memm herewith sent contains nearly the same requests that are made in this letter, but I send it notwithstanding. I wish you well and am etc.

P. S. Direct your next letter to me, to be left at the Post Office in Baltimore till called for. If I set off according to my present expectation, I shall, probably lodge in that Town on thursday Night; which is the Night the Mail of that day from Alexandria reaches that place.[88]

*To WILLIAM DEAKINS, JUNIOR

Philadelphia, June 6, 1796.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 27th. Ulto. has been duly received. Before I knew or had heard of any movement in the Federal City, among the proprietors thereof, I had in answering some dispatches from the Commissioners, given it to them as my clear and decided opinion, that those who were entrusted, with the affairs of the City, ought to be residents thereof. It is and has always been my Opinion. It was the principle upon which the new Establishment, and compensation took place; and what I have always expected, would happen; as soon as accommodations could be provided. To assign all the reasons for this opinion, which have weight in my mind; would run me into prolixity, unnecessarily; as few of them can have escaped a reflecting man. One however, I brought to your view upon a former occasion; when you suggested a Resident of George Town for a Commissioner. although that case may not apply *quite* as strongly to any of the present Commissioners, yet it *does*

[88] From the printed text in M. D. Conway's *George Washington and Mount Vernon*, Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4).

apply, and in that degree is injurious; as you see by the effects, and the complaints.

The time in which a great deal is to be done, is short; In the discussion of the Guarantee Bill, all the Faupaus, which have been committed, all the neglect, inattentions and want of close and constant instructions to those to whom the business was intrusted have undergone severe animadversions, It has been said, that if the Commissioners, and those who had been receiving compensations from the public, had been on the spot, the abuses which the principal buildings had sustained could not have happened; that they would have perceived the errors in their origin, and would have correct'd them as fast as they arose. In a word, that there can be no œconomy without a close inspection, nor a close inspection by men at a distance &ca, &ca. Knowing these things as I do; and how much depends upon exertion, it behoves me, while I have any thing to do in the business, to attend to measures and not merely to the conveniencies of those who are to execute them. If the two can be blended, it is well; but the first is, and must be, the primary consideration.

Nothing, pointing directly to yourself (Office I mean) has been said further, than while the Agents, and principal Officers of the City, reside out of it and in G Town, the attraction *is* where it *ought not to be*, were the Interest of the former, and the accommodation of Congress (when the Government moves to it) as they ought, to be the primary object. I write in haste, the Post hour being at hand, but can assure you that I am etc.

*To CYRUS GRIFFIN

Philadelphia, June 8, 1796.

Sir: I am sorry, that without being accused, you should think it necessary to go into a lengthy justification of your conduct and principles.

What the entire design of your letter of the 23d. ulto.[89] may be, I am at a loss to conceive; and pressed as I have been, and still am, on all sides, in the discharge of my public functions, I have no leizure to enquire. If the object of it (among other things) is to intimate that you have been overlooked in some recent appointments, I can only say, that nominations are made from the best view I am able to take of the cases which come before me. in doing which I have often, if not always, where the appointments are not of a local nature, found it necessary to combine a variety of considerations, none of which, however, have originated from a desire to serve a friend or relation; or a wish to oblige this, or that man, or set of men; but from the information I can obtain (where I have no personal knowledge) of the fitness of characters to offices.

That I may have erred, and in many instances made injudicious nominations, is highly probable: wonderful indeed would it be, if the case was otherwise; but numerous, and chagreening as disappointments may have been to individuals (and abundant they are) I can defy malignancy itself to ascribe partiality, or interested motives to any of my nominations; or omissions, to prejudice or dislike. I have naught therefore, on this score to reproach myself with.

For the attachment you have professed for my person and administration, I pray you to accept my best thanks, and the assurances of the esteem and regard with which I am &c.

To HENRY KNOX

Philadelphia, June 8, 1796.

My dear Sir: I wou'd not let Mr. Bingham (who says he is about to Visit you) depart without acknowledging the receipt

[89] This letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

of several letters from you; and offering Mrs. Knox and yourself, my sincere condolence on your late heavy loss. Great and trying, as it must be to your sensibility, I am persuaded after the first severe pangs are over you both possess fortitude enough to view the event, as the dispensation of providence, and will submit to its decrees, with philosophical resignation.

The footing on which you placed the non-acceptance of the Commission for ascertaining the true St. Croix, was such, as to leave no hope of your embarking in that undertaking. After the arrival of the Commissioners from Great Britain, and his readiness to proceed therein was announced. I therefore nominated; and Mr. Howell[90] (of Rhode Island) by the advice and consent of the Senate, is nominated in your place and Mr. Sullivan[91] [designated to prepare the business for them.

Mr. Bingham is so well versed in the Politics of this place, and South of it. and so well acquainted with the movements in both houses of Congress, that it would be a Work of Supererogation in me, to give you the details. To him then I refer you for such relations as are interesting.

On Monday next, if not prevented by occurrences yet unforeseen, I shall commence my Journey for Mt. Vernon; but shall myself be returned to this City again before the first of September; not chusing to be longer absent from the Seat of Government. My best wishes, in which Mrs. Washington unites, are tendered to Mrs. Knox, your self and family; and with sincere friendship and affectionate regard I am etc.][92]

[90] David Howell.

[91] James Sullivan, of Massachusetts. He was United States agent for managing affairs under the 5th Article of Jay's Treaty.

[92] The part within brackets is from a photostat of the incompleted press copy of the original, which is in the writing of Washington, in the Chicago Historical Society The first part is supplied from the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

*To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Philadelphia, June 9, 1796.

Sir: The Instructions for Mr. King, herewith returned, appear to me to be proper. To them, however, I think might be added a desire that, he should attempt to remove any doubts which may arise in the construction of the Article relative to our Trade with the East Indies; and to get relieved if it be practicable from the restrictions on our Vessels going from thence with their Cargoes to China.

I shall not impede the forwarding of the other Instructions to the Accomptant, for the British Spoliations, as they are now drawn. At the sametime I cannot forbear observing that I think £500 Sterling would have been ample compensation for such a character.

1st. Because no such Officer was conceived necessary by the Negociators of the Treaty; nor provided for in the estimate to Congress.

2d. Because among other inducements to the appointment of Mr. Gore,[93] his supposed knowledge of Commerce was one (a legal and Commercial character being deemed necessary for the purposes of the Commission.) Why then it may be asked, seek for the latter character in an Accountant of *new creation* uncontemplated by the Treaty? And this question more than probable will be accompanied with the charge of favoritism to the wishes of the person designated and his friends, and,

4th. [*sic*] Because our Secretaries of Legation are not allowed half what is proposed to be given as compensation to this Accountant.

[93] Christopher Gore, of Massachusetts. He was United States Commissioner for carrying into execution the 7th Article of Jay's Treaty.

*To WILLIAM BINGHAM

Thursday Morning, June 9, 1796.

The President presents his compliments to Mr. Bingham. Takes the liberty of troubling him with the care of the enclosed letter to General Knox; and of wishing him, Mrs. Bingham and the Party, a pleasant journey, and Safe return.

Recollecting that Mr. Bingham, some days ago, was making some enquiries on the Subject of Manures, and having had several Copies of a propd. Report sent to him by Sir John Sinclair, the Presidt. asks Mr. Bingham's acceptance of one copy of the said Report.[94]

To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

Philadelphia, June 10, 1796.

By virtue of the Act entitled "An Act making further provision for the expenses attending the intercourse of the United States with foreign nations;" and to continue in force the act entitled "An Act providing the means of intercourse between the United States and foreign nations," passed on the 30 of May in the year 1796.

I do hereby authorize and empower you, by yourself or any other person or persons to borrow on behalf of the United States, of the Bank of the Ud. States or any other body or bodies politic, person or persons, any sum not exceeding in the whole Three hundred and twenty four thousand, five hundred and thirty nine Dollars and six Cents; and to make or cause to be made for that purpose such contract or contracts as shall be necessary and for the interest of the said States.[95]

[94] From the original through the kindness of Forest H. Sweet, of Battle Creek, Mich.
[95] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

To GEORGE MATHEWS

Philadelphia, June 10, 1796.

Sir: You inform me that you have it in contemplation to leave the United States for a time, if not forever; and request from me "such a testimonial of your character and conduct as justice may entitle you to."

I know, sir, and with pleasure bear testimony to your patriotism, and to your bravery in action in the defence of the rights and liberties of your Country. In the offices you have held, military and civil, I believe you have manifested that fortitude, prudence and integrity, which entitle you to the praise of having deserved well of your Country. In whatever place you shall choose your future residence, accept my good wishes for your prosperity and happiness.[96]

*To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, June 10, 1796.

Gentlemen: Your letters of the 31st. Ulto. and 3d. Instant, came to hand by the same Mail, on tuesday last.

The Duplicate of the Powers to Messrs. Willink's, have been handed over, for the purpose of transmission. Triplicates,

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[96] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

This letter was inclosed in another letter from Washington to ex-Governor Mathews, of Georgia, of this same date (June 10): "The best, indeed the *only* excuse I can make for having so long delayed complying with the request of your favor written the 7th of March, is, that when it came to hand (which was not speedily after its date) the business of the session pressed so heavily on me, that I had but little leisure for other attentions; and by laying it by, to be taken up at a more convenient moment, it, in a jumble with other papers was overlooked, until a revision, after the adjournment took place, brought it to view again. This apology I thought due to you, at the same time that it gives me another occasion to express my good wishes towards you, and regret that any circumstances should arise that have, even for a moment, encouraged the idea of relinquishing your country forever." This letter is also entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers.*

signed by a full board may not be amiss. I will receive them however at the City.

I am very glad to hear that you have recommenced your operations on the public buildings: exceedingly is it to be wished, that you may be able to proceed therein with vigour. I much question whether *any* of the Banks in *this* City are to be relied on for a loan. The reason for this, needs no explanation. I shall, however, mention the matter to the Secretary of the Treasury; and what I can do, consistently with my official character, may be relied on. If, as I expect to do, I should receive money for some of my Western Lands which have been sold, I will (though it will be little more than a drop in the Bucket) pay the *whole* sum due from me for the lots I hold in the City; and request that the account (agreeably to the terms of Sale) may be made out accordingly, against my arrival. In the last Instalments, I conceive I have been charged more than was due: this, if true, can be rectified by having recourse to the dates of the Sales, times of payment, and the sums paid. Mr. Morris, I am informed, talks of visiting the City in the course of next week. You, probably, have better data than I possess, to form an opinion of the certainty of it, and the result.

Thinking it probable that I shall be in the Federal City the latter end of next Week, provided nothing new occurs, I shall only add that with great esteem etc.[97]

To JAMES ROSS

Philadelphia, June 11, 1796.

Dear Sir: I should not have given you the trouble of receiving a letter from me, at this time but for the purpose of correcting a mistake which in a degree implicates you.

[97] From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

Two or three days ago a person, (whose name I did not ask) called upon me, at the request he said of Mr. Shreve [with] £100 on account of the Land he had purchased of me. I told him I would not receive money from that Gentleman in driblets; that nothing less than the whole of the Second payment which was £600, and Interest wou'd be received, and that if I was thus trifled with by Colo. Shreve, I would have recause to other means to obtain a more punctual Compliance with our bargain.

This reply produced a further offer, to the amount I think in the whole sum of £300 but conceiving as I did at that moment, that the *whole* second Installment was due, I refused this sum also. Nor was it before this morning it occurred to me, that in April last you paid me Eleven hundred and sixty Dollars, in part of this Installment.

Having made this discovery too late, to rectify it with the person who was charged with a paymt. by Colo. Shreve, and having authorised that person [to] inform him that nothing short of the whole sum due, would content me, I feel it incumbent on me to give you this explanation of the matter; and through you if an occasion should present of making it to Colo. Shreve.

I think it not improbable, that the person I allude to (not knowing his name,) with the aid of the 1160 dollars, recd. from you, would have paid the whole sum due on the Second instalment, with interest agreeable to the Articles; for he is a purchaser from Shreve, of part of the Tract at a price very considerably advanced.

Not knowing whether Mr. Charles Morgan is living or dead, or what has been done relatively to the Rents, which was due on the Land, will you permit me to request the favor of you, to ask

him (if in being) or Colo. Shreve when I am to receive it. I am in the same predicament with respect to the Rents of the land on millers Run and shall be equally obliged to your enquiries concerning it. With very Great esteem etc.

P. S. For the government of those who may have business to transact with me, I add, that on monday next I shall leave this City for Virginia; that I shall return to it again before the 1st. Septr. and shall remain here untill the middle of the month.[98]

To DAVID HUMPHREYS

Philadelphia, June 12, 1796.

My dr. Humphreys: I could not suffer Captain O'Brian to return without carrying along with him this evidence of my continued regard and friendship for you. In expressing of which, I shall be concise; for a long and interesting session, closed only the first day of this month; many laws wch. require immediate attention and execution; added to a preparation for a journey to Mount Vernon (tomorrow) for a little relaxation from the unpleasant scenes which have been, and are continually presenting themselves to my view, will not, however well disposed I might otherwise be, permit me to be profuse.

From the Office of State you will receive every thing that relates to business; and the gazettes, which I presume accompany the dispatches, will bring you pretty well acquainted with the state of politics and of parties in this country; and shew you in what manner I am attacked for a steady opposition to every measure which has a tendency to disturb the peace and tranquillity of it. But these attacks, unjust and unpleasant as they are, will occasion no change in my conduct; nor will they work

[98] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

any other effect in my mind, than to increase the anxious desire which has long possessed my breast, to enjoy in the shades of retirement the consolation of having rendered my Country every service my abilities were competent to, uninfluenced by pecuniary or ambitious considerations as they respected myself, and without any attempt to provide for my friends farther than their merits, abstractedly, entitle them to; nor an attempt in *any* instance to bring a relation of mine into Office. Malignity therefore may dart her shafts; but no earthly power can deprive me of the consolation of knowing that I have not in the course of my administration been guilty of a *wilful* error, however numerous they may have been from other causes. When you shall think with the poet that "the post of honor is a private station," and may be inclined to enjoy yourself in my shades (I do not mean the shades below, where, if you put it off long, I may be) I can only tell you that you will meet with the same cordial reception at Mount Vernon that you have always experienced at that place, and that I am, &c.[99]

*To SIR JOHN SINCLAIR

Philadelphia, June 12, 1796.

Sir: A long, and interesting Session of Congress which did not close untill the first day of this month, and the Laws which required to be carried into execution promply, will I am persuaded be admitted a reasonable excuse for my not writing to you since the 20th. of Feby. last, agreeably to assurances then given. But what apology can I offer *now,* that I am about to give you the result of the enquiries you requested me to make, when it will be found to fall so far short of what you might

[99] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.* The press copy of the last two pages of the original is owned by Mrs. J. W. Williams, of St. Andrews, Scotland. It has been poorly inked over by an unknown hand and wrongly dated June 1.

have expected from the time which has been taken to obtain them.

Your wishes on this head I have committed to Richard Peters Esqr who is one of the most intelligent and best, practical as well as theoretical farmers we have; with a desire that he wou'd advise with others, and condense their observations in a summary Statement. Why this was done; and why *he* could do no more, you will find in his own, original letter, with the questions and answers therein enclosed.

To Mr. Peters experience with respect to Gypsum as a manure, let me add the following as an unequivocal evidence, that it has no effect on stiff, heavy land, that does not absorb or permit the water on the surface, occasioned by superabundant falls of Rain or Snow, to penetrate quickly; which is the case, generally, with the Soil of my Estate, at Mount Vernon. The experiments I made and proofs which I allude, to were made Eight or nine years ago; at the rate of from one to twenty bushels of the Plaster of Paris to the acre (among other things, to ascertain the just quantum used). I spread it on, grass grounds, and on ploughed land. On the latter, part of it was ploughed in; part harrowed in; part scratched in with a light bush, while another part lay undisturb'd on the surface. All with Oats, in the Spring. But it had no more effect in *any* instance, *then* or *since,* than so much of the earth it was spread over would have had, if it had been taken up and spread again.

If any thing should hereafter occur on this, or any other subject, which I may think worthy your attention, in this interesting branch of your pursuits, I shall not fail to communicate them to you; being with very great esteem, respect and consideration Sir, Your etc.[1]

[1]The press copy in the *Washington Papers* is nearly illegible and the text has been completed from the facsimile in *Letters on Agriculture . . . to Arthur Young . . . and Sir John Sinclair . . .* (Washington: 1847).

*To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Mount Vernon, June 22, 1796.

Sir: Your letters of the 14th and 15th instant have been received, but not in time to have been answered by the Post of Monday last; being then on my Journey to this place.[2]

The ground on which you place the compliance with Lieutt. Geddes's[3] request, appears to be the best the nature of the case is now susceptible of; and for that purpose, I return the Proceedings of the Court Martial and other Papers relative thereto, that they may be forwarded to the Commandant at West point.

As Major Cushing[4] founds his application for a furlough (among other reasons) on his having been on duty ever since he entered the service in the year 1791, and because he was permitted to visit his friends in the Eastern States I think he ought to be endulged in a *reasonable* absence from the Army; counting the time he has spent in Philadelphia as part of it, although it was not the place to have effected the last of the objects before mentioned; and surely not the best for restoring health, that had been debilitated by a severe intermittant last Autumn; (another reason he has assigned in favor of the indulgence he solicits).

I forgot to obtain a certified copy from the Office of State (with the Seal annexed) of the Act Guaranteeing the loan for the use of the Federal City, and another respecting (if I recollect rightly) the authenticity of the Commissioners appointment both of which were deemed necessary to accompany the

[2] Washington left Philadelphia the morning of June 13. He arrived at Washington, June 18; at Georgetown, June 19; and at Mount Vernon, June 20.

[3] Lieut. Simon Geddes, U. S. Artillery and Engineers. He was dismissed in December, 1796.

[4] Maj. Thomas Humphrey Cushing, U. S. Sub-legion, later Inspector General, United States Army.

Power of Attorney to Messrs. Willinks. Let these be sent to me by the return Post, and I will cause triplicates to be forwarded from hence to those gentlemen in order to insure the arrival of one sett.

*To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

(Private)

Mount Vernon, June 24, 1796.

Dear Sir: If in the opinion of Judges, it is thought best for my India wine to remain undisturbed where it now is, I am content it should remain there. I had, however, directed Mr. Kitt[5] (my household Steward) to learn when it would be ready for landing; and to have it brought up, and stored in my own Cellar; where, it would not only have been safe, but would also have remained undisturbed; which may not be the case in a Merchants Cellar which is continually receiving, and disgorging its liquors; and frequently removing one Cask to get at another.

You will perceive by the copy of a letter which goes from me to Colo. Pickering by the Post of tomorrow from Alexa. that, be the circumstances of the Mount Vernon[6] as they may there is strong ground to believe the French mean to continue the practice of siezing our Vessels in their Commerce with Great Britain. It is the Buzz of the Democrats; And the Aurora is, evidently, preparing the Public mind for the event as the *natural* consequence of the ratification of the British Treaty.

This measure will merit serious consideration, and close investigation; and I hope it will meet with them accordingly,

[5] Frederick Kitt.

[6] Owned by Willing & Francis, of Philadelphia, had been captured by a French privateer called the *Flying Fish*.

that the decisions of the Government may be wise, temperate and consistent.

With very great esteem etc.[7]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, June 24, 1796.

Sir: The information contained in a letter[8] of which the enclosed is a correct copy (with a reservation only of names agreeably to the request of the writer) may serve as a comment upon the conduct of the owner of the privateer Flying-fish; and as a development also of the intentions of the French Government so far as it relates to the Commerce of the United States with Great Britain. The communications in the last numbers of the Aurora (that I have seen) afford still further evidence of this system, and are calculated most evidently to prepare the public mind for this event, at the same time that they labour to make it appear that the treaty with that country is the cause of such conduct in France.

The *source* from which the information comes, cannot, as to it's authenticity and knowledge of facts, be doubted; of course, if the persons through whom it has passed to the reciter are not mistaken in their details, the most entire credit is to be given to the account.

Under these impressions, and the serious aspect which they present, it is my request that you, and the Secretaries of the Treasury and War would meet; consult the treaties, the laws of nations and of the U. States, which have any relation to the subject; and after mature deliberation, to report to me your opinions of the measures, which you conceive ought to be adopted under such information and circumstances, particularly,

[7] From a photostat of the original in the Connecticut Historical Society.

[8] From Hamilton (undated but filed in the *Washington Papers* under the date of its receipt by Washington, June 23).

1. Whether immediate explanation should be asked on this subject, from the Minister of the French Republic in Philadelphia: and in that case (which I am inclined to think is right) to proceed without the delay of sending to me, to make the requisition accordingly. Unless from the tenor of the answer to the letter you had drafted before I left Philada. respecting the capture of the Mount Vernon, it should in your judgments be unnecessary.

2. Whether there is power in the Executive, and, in that case, whether it would be expedient, in the recess of the Senate, to send an extra character to Paris to explain the views of this Government, and to ascertain those of France; and in the affirmative of these, to suggest for my consideration the names of such persons as in your opinions are best qualified to subserve these purposes.

I shall expect to hear fully from you on this interesting subject, and shall only add, that if, in the investigation of it, my presence in Philada. is deemed necessary, or if any other occurrence should require my return before the time I had allotted for it, I can and will set out for that place as soon as I am advertised of the necessity.[9]

*To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mount Vernon, June 26, 1796.

Gentlemen: On thursday last I received your letter of the 22d. instant, with its enclosures; and should have answered it

[9] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On June 24 Washington wrote to the Secretary of the Treasury, directing commissions to be made out for certain minor appointments and adding: "Of this date I have written to the Secy. of State on an interesting subject, requesting him to deliberate with you and the Secretary of War on the purport of the Communication, and to transmit me the result. To this letter and its enclosure I shall refer you." This letter is entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

by the Post of next day, but for many letters which I had to write by that Mail; which prevented my doing it till the succeeding one.

Approving of the proposed Suspension (until the first Monday [in December] of the year 1800) of the first and third articles of the terms and conditions declared on the 17th. day of October 1791 for regulating the materials, and manner of buildings and improvements on the lots in the City; I have subscribed, and do now return the Instrument[10] you forwarded to me, and give it as my opinion that the sooner, and more generally it is promulgated, the better, and more advantageous it will be.

I am glad to hear you have receivd fresh assurances of considerable pecuniary aids from Messrs. Morris and Nicholson; and especially, that this assurance has occasioned no relaxation in your other endeavors to obtain a loan.

The strong impression I am under of the indispensable necessity of close attention, and great exertion to prepare for the reception of Congress by the year 1800, must, in addition to the propriety of the measure, apologize for my urging again, that those on whom the operation of the works materially depend, may be compelled to take their Stations convenient to the same. It cannot be tolerated, that the Superintendant, and others, whose duty it is to see that everything moves harmoniously as well as œconomically; and who to effect these ought always to be on the spot, to receive applications and to provide instanta-

[10] This "instrument" is the Executive Order of June 25, the original signed document of which is in *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress. It directs the suspension until the first Monday in December, in the year 1800, of the first and third regulations of Oct. 17, 1791, whereby no house wall could be higher than 40 feet in any part of the city, and none should be lower than 30 feet on any of the avenues; and that "all the houses which shall be erected in the said City of Washington, prior to the first Monday in December, one thousand, eight hundred, conformable, in other respects, to the Regulations aforesaid, shall be considered as lawfully erected."

neously for wants; should be at the distance of three miles from the active scenes of their employments. The convenience of those who receive compensations from the public, cannot, must not, be the primary object of consideration; for sure I am (be the State and condition of the public buildings in the year 1800 what they may) there will not be accommodation for Congress at *that* period within such a distance of the Capitol as to induce a removal, if those whose particular duty it is to be there, and to set an example, hang aloof, and fix the attraction another way. The consequences of such a deficiency, not only to the City, but to George Town, and all the interest thereabouts, is too evident to stand in need of prediction.

If I am urgent on this point, it is from the clearest conviction of the utility of the measure; and not from a desire to incommode one person, or to gratify another. Of this I beg you to be persuaded; as also, that with great esteem etc.[11]

*To ROBERT LEWIS

Mount Vernon, June 26, 1796.

Dear Sir: We arrived at this place on Monday last, where it is probable I shall remain until the middle of August, when public business will require *my* attendance in Philadelphia until towards the end of September. I shall then return to this place again, for Mrs. Washington, with whom in the latter part of October, I shall make my last journey, to close my public life the 4th. of March, after which no consideration under heaven that I can foresee shall again with draw me from the walks of private life.

I am sorry you have met with so much trouble and difficulty on account of the Land, I presumed I had an indisputable title

[11] From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

to, on Accoceek Run,[12] especially as by your information they appear to have been unavailing. It might be well, however, before you give the matter up, to examine my Mothers Will; to see if it is not bequeathed to me in *that.* I ought to have a letter from her, but I do not find it among my Papers at this place, declaratory of her intention of giving it to me; this was often done orally, but the truth is, conceiving it would come to me by discent, I never give myself any trouble about the Conveyance. When I return to Philadelphia I will examine my Papers there, to see if the letter before alluded to can be found; but even this, with the knowledge of my Mother's intentions of giving it to me, could only establish the *equitable* title; for the legal one wd. still be where the Law, or Constitution of the State, has placed it. The whole therefore depends upon whether there be any mention of the land in the Will.

I am sorry to hear of the death of Mrs. Haney; and will very chearfully receive her daughter the moment I get settled at this place; sooner it would be impossible; because this house will be, as it has been, empty from the time we shall quit it in October, until my final establishment in the Spring. Such necessaries as she needs in the meantime may, however, be furnished her at my expence, and if it is inconvenient for you to retain her in your own house, let her be boarded in some respectable family, where her morals and good behaviour will be attended to; at my expence also. Let her want for nothing that is decent and proper; and if she remains in your family, I wish for the Girls sake, as well as for the use she may be of to your Aunt when she comes here; that Mrs. Lewis would keep her industriously employed, *always,* and instructed in the care, and œconomy of housekeeping.

[12] Accokeek Run.

There is another reason against her coming here until I am permanently fixed; and that is, that my house, I expect, will be crowded with company all the while we shall be at it, this Summer, as the Ministers of France, Great Britain and Portugal, in succession, intend to be here. Besides other strangers.

My best wishes, to which your Aunts are united, are presented to yourself and Mrs. Lewis, and I remain Your sincere friend and Affecte. Uncle.[13]

*To ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Mount Vernon, June 26, 1796.

My dear Sir: Your letter without date, came to my hands by wednesdays Post; and by the first Post afterwards I communicated the purport of it (withholding the names) to the Secretary of State; with directions to bestow the closest attention to the subject, and if the application which had been made to the Minister of France, consequent on the Capture of the Ship Mount Vernon, had not produced such an answer as to supercede the necessity, then to endeavor to obtain such explanation of the views of the French government relatively to our Commerce with Great Britain, as the nature of the case appeared to require.

That the fact is, as has been presented to you, I have very little, if any doubt. Many, very many circumstances are continually happening in confirmation of it: among which, it is evident Bache's Paper, which *receives* and *gives* the tone, is endeavouring to prepare the Public mind for this event, by representing it as the *predicted,* and *natural* consequence of the Ratification of the Treaty with Great Britn.

[13] From a photograph of the original kindly furnished by Mrs. Robert Malcolm Littlejohn, of New York City.

Let me ask therefore. Do you suppose that the Executive, in the recess of the Senate, has power in such a case as the one before us, especially if the measure should not be *avowed* by authority, to send a special character to Paris, as Envoy Extraordinary, to give, and receive explanations? And if there be a doubt, whether it is not probable, nay, more than probable, that the French Directory would, in the present state of things, avail themselves of the unconstitutionallity of the measure, to decline receiving him? The policy of delay, to avoid explanations, would induce them to adopt any pretext to accomplish it. Their reliance upon a party in this country for support, would stimulate them to this conduct; And we may be assured they will not be deficient in the most minute details of every occurrence, and every opinion, worthy of communication. If then an Envoy cannot be sent to Paris without the Agency of the Senate, will the information you have received, admitting it should be realized, be sufficient ground for convening that body?

These are serious things; they may be productive of serious consequences; and therefore require very serious and cool deliberation. Admitting, however, that the Powers of the President during the recess, were adequate to such an appointment, where is the character who would go, that unites the proper qualifications for such a Mission; and would not be obnoxious to one party or the other? And what should be done with Mr. M——[14] in that case?

As the affairs of this country in their administration, receive great embarrassment from the conduct of characters among ourselves; and as every act of the Executive is mis-represented, and tortured with a view to make it appear odious, the aid of the friends to government is peculiarly necessary under such

[14] James Monroe.

circumstances; and at such a crises as the present: It is unnecessary therefore to add, that I should be glad upon the present, and all other important occasions, to receive yours: and as I have great confidence in the abilities, and purity of Mr. Jays views, as well as in his experience, I should wish that his sentiments on the purport of this letter; and other interesting matters as they occur, may accompany yours; for having no other wish than to promote the true and permanent interests of this country, I am anxious, always, to compare the opinions of those in whom I confide with one another; and those again (without being bound by them) with my own, that I may extract all the good I can.

Having from a variety of reasons (among which a disinclination to be longer buffited in the public prints by a set of infamous scribblers) taken my ultimate determination "To seek the Post of honor in a private Station" I regret exceedingly that I did not publish my valedictory address the day after the Adjournment of Congress. This would have preceeded the canvassing for Electors (wch is commencing with warmth, in this State). It would have been announcing *publicly,* what seems to be very well understood, and is industriously propagated, *privately.* It would have removed doubts from the mind of *all,* and left the field clear for *all:* It would, by having preceeded any unfavorable change in our foreign relations (if any should happen) render my retreat less difficult and embarrassing. And it might have prevented the remarks which, more than probable will follow a late annunciation, namely, that I delayed it long enough to see, that the current was turned against me, before I declared my intention to decline. This is one of the reasons which makes me a little tenacious of the draught I furnished you with, to be modified and corrected.

Having passed, however, what *I now* conceive would have been the *precise* moment to have Addressed my Constituents,

let me ask your opinion (under a full conviction that nothing will shake my determination to withdraw) of the *next* best time, considering the present, and what may, probably, be the existing state of things at different periods previous to the Election; or rather, the middle of Octr; beyond which the promulgation of my intentions cannot be delayed. Let me hear from you as soon as it is convenient;[15] and be assured always of the sincere esteem, and affecte. regard of.[16]

*To JEREMIAH WADSWORTH

Mount Vernon, June 26, 1796.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 12th. instt. found me at this place; having left Philadelphia on the 13th.

I thank you for the purchase of a Naraganset on my Acct.; and pray, unless a good and safe opportunity shd. offer, by which he could be sent to my Stables in Philadelphia (by the same hand) that you would commit him to the care of some honest farmer in your neighbourhood (to be well fed) until my return to the Seat of Government; which will happen before the last of August. Whatever expence is incurred for the

[15] Hamilton's reply to this letter (July 5, 1796) is in the New York Public Library It reads, in part: "As to your resignation (Sir) it is not to be regretted that the declaration of your intention should be suspended as long as possible and suffer me to add that you should *really hold the thing undecided to the last moment.* I do not think it is in the power of party to throw any slur upon the lateness of your declaration. And you have an obvious justification in the state of things. If a storm gathers, how can you retreat? This is a most serious question. The proper period now for your declaration seems to be *Two months* before the time for the Meeting of the Electors. This will be sufficient. The parties will in the meantime electioneer conditionally, that is to say, *if you decline;* for a serious opposition to you will I think hardly be *risked.* I have completed the full draft of a certain paper and shall shortly transcribe correct and forward it. I will then also prepare and send forward without delay the original paper corrected upon the general plan of it so that you may have both before you for a choice in full time and for alteration if necessary." John C. Hamilton's edition of the *Works of Hamilton,* states that this letter is in the *Washington Papers.*

[16] From the *Hamilton Papers* in the Library of Congress.

feed, pasturage, and care of him, shall be paid the moment the account of them is presented.

On, or before my arrival in Philadelphia (if the above event should not take place previous thereto) I will request him to be sent on in the manner you have suggested, and will forward a Servant to meet him at New York; being apprised of the day he will be there.

It may happen, though it is not within the chances, that some person (in whom you could confide) having business in the Federal City, or Alexandria, might find it convenient to ride him there, rather than travel in the Stage; should this happen, it would suit me better than either of the former modes.

You have made a cheaper purchase than I expected: and if there is any person in this part of the Country, or Philadelphia to whom you would have the hundred and thirty dollars paid, it shall be immediately done; or if you would have it in promisary Bank notes of the United States, under cover of a letter, that sum shall be transmitted to you, in this manner, by the first Post after I receive the advice.

If I should not be embarked on some other journey, two or three years hence, I shall remember your promise to furnish me with a Naraganset of your own raising. My best respects are presented to Mrs. Wadsworth and the family, and with very great esteem etc.[17]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, June 27, 1796.

Sir: The post of friday, to Alexandria, brought me your dispatches of the 22d. instant.

[17] From a photostat of the original in the Connecticut State Library.

Mr. Adet's answer to your communication, relatively to the capture of the ship Mount Vernon, leaves the matter as undecided as before; and his reserve may, it is to be feared, be considered as a collateral evidence of the truth of the information I handed to you in my last; and contribute to shew the necessity of having a proper understanding of this matter.

The privateer Flying-fish, might not have *brought* orders for capturing our provision vessels bound to british posts, but she might have *received* them through Mr. Bournonville who came out at the same time the French Commissioners did to St. Domingo.

My sentiments with respect to the successor for the office rendered vacant by the death of Mr. Gorham, and the changes consequent of the removal of Mr. Jonathan Jackson[18] to it, were communicated by the last Post to the Secretary of the Treasury; who was also informed, that in case of the non-acceptance of the office of District Attorney for Massachusetts by Mr. H. G. Otis,[19] I approve of its' being given to Mr. Davis[20] the present Comptroller, provided his professional knowledge (of which I had no correct information) was deemed adequate to the discharge of the duties, and he would place himself in a situation to render them conveniently to the public.

If Mr. DeWitt[21] should decline the office of surveyor General, give me notice of it without delay; and you may accompany it with the names of persons (if any should occur or be brought to your view) as may be thought qualified for so important and trust-worthy an appointment.

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[18] He succeeded the vacancy of supervisor for the Massachusetts District, caused by the death of Nathaniel Gorham.

[19] Harrison Gray Otis.

[20] John Davis. He was appointed United States attorney for the Massachusetts District.

[21] Simeon De Witt. He declined the appointment.

Are there any accounts yet from Captn. Lewis? And what are the last accounts from the western posts? Let the letter which goes under cover with this for Major Pinckney, receive the earliest safe conveyance which may offer, as I find by the paper it has missed the hands of Mr. King, by whom I intended to forward it.[22]

To BUSHROD WASHINGTON

Mount Vernon, June 29, 1796.

Dear Bushrod: You have not informed me what or whether any thing has been done in the Court of Chancery (in this State) for bringing the accts. of my Administration of Colo. Colvills Estate to a close, that my hands may be entirely clear, of it. I therefore give you the trouble of this enquiry; as I am extremely anxious to be acquitted. The balance due from me, (and at present lodged in the Bank of Alexandria) is ready to be applied in any manner and at any moment to the Chancellors order.

I drew a prize in Colo. Byrds lottery, of a half acre lot, No. 265. I believe in the Town of Manchester, and I have a lot in some Town that was established on James River (below Richmd.) by a certain John Wood for which I have a deed (but it is in Philadelphia) if these are to be found and worth your acceptance, I will give them to you. I am entitled also in partnership with, or the Heirs of Peyton Randolph, Richard Randolph, Mr. Fitzhugh of Chatham, George Wythe, Richard Kidder Meade, Lewis Burwell, John Wales, Nathaniel Harrison, Junr., and Thomson Mason, to a tenth part of two or three half Acre lots; and 200 Acre lots in the aforesaid lottery. But as Thomson Mason (with or without authority) sold this

[22] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

property and never to me at least accounted, for an iota of the amount little I presume is to be expected from this concern but if you think or find it otherwise upon enquiry, I give you all the Interest I have therein and you may act accordingly. With Sincere friendship I remain etc.[23]

*To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Mount Vernon, July 1, 1796.

Sir: Your letter of the 27th. Ulto. by Post, with its enclosures (the originals of which, I return) came to my hands on Wednesday. And your other letters of the 27th. and 28th. by Express, was received about five oclock yesterday afternoon.

The accounts brought in the latter, are very pleasing indeed, inasmuch as they will serve to remove the doubts of the credulous (with respect to the Western Posts); and when realized, be productive of that tranquillity, and peace with the Indians which, in itself, is so desirable; and has been so much wished and sought for, by every real friend to his Country.

It is my desire that the charges exhibited against General Wayne by Brigadier Wilkenson, with the letters of crimination on both sides, should be laid before the heads of Departments; and yours and their opinions reported to me on the measures necessary to be pursued to do justice to the Public; the accused; and the accuser; As also when, and by whom, the enquiry is to be made; with the preliminary steps necessary thereto.[24]

There are no Officers, I conceive, of sufficient rank to constitute a Court before whom the Commander in chief can be brought. Is the matter then to come before Congress? In what

[23] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[24] McHenry's answer, dated Oct. 10, 1796, is in the *Washington Papers*.

manner? My first impression relative to this business (though not maturely, or distinctly formed) is, that General Wayne ought, immediately, to be furnished with a copy of *all* the charges exhibited against him by the Brigadier; in order, as many of them are of old standing that he may have time allowed him to recollect circumstances; and to see what satisfactory explanations can be given; that he may not be unprepared for trial whensoever he is called upon.

It may be well if it can be accomplished, by civil expressions, to stimulate the present Governor of Tennessee to an effectual repression of incroachments on Indian Territory (secured to them by Treaties): but the honor of the government, and the Peace of the Union, require, that if he is not decisive, the Laws relative thereto, be not suspended, or trifled with; but promptly, and energetically (with temper and prudence) enforced.

I will not speak upon the new model of the Army now, but will take more time to consider the scheme for resolving the Legion into four Regiments, on the plan you have suggested.

In speaking of the Generals Wayne and Wilkinson, I omitted to add, as my opinion, that the latter (if leave has not been given already) ought to obtain the furlough he has asked; and as soon as the former joins the Army; for no good will result from both being with it in the irritable temper they are in, at the sametime.[25]

*To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

(Private)

Mount Vernon, July 1, 1796.

Dear Sir: By the Post, rather than by the Express, you will receive my Official letter, and its Enclosures. For the difference

[25] From the *McHenry Photostats* in the Library of Congress.

of a few hours, in a case that is not urgent, I would have you avoid sending an Express to me. The latter does not travel faster than the Mail; of course there cannot (unless Sunday intervene's) be more, in any case (supposing an occasion to arise in one hour after the Mail was closed) than the difference of 48 hours in the receipt of the dispatches; as I send regularly, every Post day, to Alexandria for my letters. Your Express came in yesterday at 5 oclock in the afternoon, and if you had sent the letters by the Mail of Wednesday, they would have been here at 9 o'clock this Afternoon; a difference of 28 hours only.

The information brot. by Captn. Lewis is very pleasing;[26] and I hope the orders on both sides will go smoothly into effect: but the Aurora will have doubts, that all is not well, notwithstanding. This, however, is a matter of course; for the Executive Acts *must be* arraigned.

I hope you have got perfectly recovered, and that Mrs. McHenry and the rest of your family are well also.

When I left Philadelphia, it was expected that Mr. and Mrs. Liston[27] (and from their own declaration) was to follow, on a visit to this place, in ten days; an interval of a few days, and then the Chevr. de Freire and Lady were to follow them; and altho' Mr. Adet gave *me* (tho' asked) no assurance that he would make me a visit, yet to Mr. Fayette he said he should set out in ten days. Since which I have heard nothing from, or of any of them, which occasions suspence, that impede other arrangements.

[26] Captain Lewis, wrote McHenry to Washington (June 23), "was treated with much civility by Lord Dorchesters family . . . the people seemed every where pleased at the prospect of a friendly intercourse with our citizens. Lord Dorchester was particular in his inquiries respecting your health, and seemed pleased to learn that you were well. . . . Lewis could have dined out for a month at Quebec. The first toast the King of Great Britain, the second, invariably, the President." McHenry's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

[27] Mr. and Mrs. Robert Liston, the Minister from Great Britain, and his wife.

If you could therefore indirectly, or at least informally, ascertain whether and when, I am to receive these visits, I should be obliged to you; as it would enable me to regulate some other matters which depend thereon. With sincere esteem etc.
Friday 7 Oclock in the Morng.

Have you allotted any Infantry for the Posts of Oswego and Niagara? How many, and when will they be there?

*To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mount Vernon, July 1, 1796.

Gentlemen: Your two letters, dated the 29th. Ulto, have been received. The enclosures for the several Printers, to whom they are directed, are franked; and will go with this, and other letters to the Post Office this afternoon. I do not think it would be amiss to add Hartford, in Connecticut (a paper of extensive circulation altho' I do not recollect the name of the Editor of it) and some Gazette in North Carolina, to your list of publications.

The decisive manner in which you treated the notification of Mr. Hadfield, was, in my opinion, very proper. There ought to be no trifling in these matters. Coaxing a man to stay in Office, or to do his duty while he is in it, is not the way to accomplish the object.

Having received (by the last Post) the certificates I wrote to Philadelphia for, I enclose them, with the Power of Attorney to Messrs. Willinks, that you may forward them by the first conveyance that offers. I am not in the way to hear of any.

The continual disappointments of Messrs. Morris and Nicholson are really painful. One would hope that their assurances were not calculated for delay, and yet they seem to admit of hardly any other interpretation. An answer from the Secretary

of the Treasury might, and I think ought to have been received by you, on Wednesday last.

With esteem etc.[28]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, July 1, 1796.

Sir: Your letter of the 27th is received. I am sorry Mr. DeWitt, from the competency of his abilities to discharge the duties of the office of Surveyor General, declines accepting it.

Colo. Tinsley's[29] recommendations go more to the respectability of his character, than his scientific knowledge. The first is essential; but not sufficient without the other. I will obtain the best information I can respecting the latter; but would not have you discourage any other eligible applications on his account.

From the representation of Mr. Dinsmore,[30] it appears to be indispensable that the line, between the United States and the Cherokees, should be run and distinctly marked as soon as possible. The Indians urge this: the law requires it; and it ought to be done: but I believe scarcely any thing short of a Chinese wall, or a line of troops, will restrain Land jobbers, and the encroachment of settlers upon the Indian territory. I request that you and the other two secretaries would take this matter into consideration, and report to me how soon, and in what manner this work should commence. Ascertaining the boundary removes the pretext of ignorance, and may with other applications *check,* if it does not effectually *cure* an evil which is pregnant of serious consequences.[31]

[28] From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

[29] Thomas Tinsley, of Virginia.

[30] Silas Dinsmore. He had been a lieutenant of the United States Artillery and Engineers, but had resigned in 1794.

[31] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

To GUSTAVUS SCOTT

Mount Vernon, July 4, 1796.

Sir: If the public dispatches which I receive, and am obliged to answer by every Post, would permit; I would go more into detail and explanation of the subject of your last (seperate) letter, than it is possible for me to do at present. I will not, however, let it pass without some further expression of my ideas; and the understanding I always had of your entrance into the Office you now hold, in the Federal City.

That the Secretary of State's letter to you (which I have not by me at this place to resort to) may have been so worded as to leave the alternative of residing in the City, or in George Town; is not necessary, if it was justifiable, to deny; because a change of circumstances would certainly authorise a change of measures. But independent of this, it must not be forgotten, that at the time the letter above alluded to was written, such an alternative was indispensable, for as much as there were no *convenient* accommodations for the Commissioners *in the City;* and because houses could not be erected in a moment, under the circumstances which then existed. In addition to this, let it be remembered also, that the first Comrs. sensible of the propriety, and advantages which would result therefrom, had resolved to build a house for their own accommodation at, or near the spot where the Hotel now stands; and were diverted from it (if my memory serves me) partly by two causes; first, from a doubt of the propriety of such an application of public money; and 2dly. from an opinion that they could be accommodated in the Hotel, when built; which, it was expected would have happened long since.

I mention these things to shew there has been no inconsistency in my sentiments or conduct; and that to enable the

Commissioners to comply with the views of Government, and to devote their time to its service, the present Compensation was resolved on.

Your other allegation is of a more serious nature; and if deception withdrew you from what you deemed a permanent establishment at Baltimore, it cannot be justified. But be assured, Sir, this is a new view of the subject; and that the proposal to you, to become a Commissioner, originated in assurances, confidently given to me, that you had resolved to remove to the Federal City, or to George Town; and because I knew you had a considerable interest in the vicinity of them. Was not the first application to you predicated on this information?

But I must be explicit in declaring, that not only to obviate the suspicions and jealousies which proceed from a residence of the Commissioners without the City, or in a remote corner of it, not only that they may be, where the busy and important scenes are transacting, that they may judge of the conduct of others not from *Reports only,* but from ocular proof, as the surest guide to Oeconomy and dispatch; Independent I say of these considerations, which are momentous of themselves, I should view the Residence of the Commissioners of the City, and their Officers of different Grades, in some central part of it as a nest egg (pardon the expression) which will attract others, and prove the *surest* means of accomplishing the great object which all have in view; the removal of Congress at the appointed time; without which, every thing will become stagnant, and your sanguine hopes blasted.

To be frank, I must give it to you as *my* opinion, that in relation to the concerns of the City, the Commissioners stand precisely in the same light (if not in a stronger one) that each does to any interesting matter in a train of execution for himself. Would you then, notwithstanding you may have an Architect to carry on your buildings on Rock Hill, and a man to

superinted [*sic*] your attending labourers, trust [to their proceeding] without your minute Inspection of their conduct? I think, and am sure you will answer, no. I do not mean by this question to exhibit a charge, for I do as truly tell you, that I do not know, or ever heard, how often you visit your own concerns there. It is upon general principles I argue. A man of Industry and exertion will not, on his own acct. have a work of that sort on hand without giving close attention to it. And certain it is, the Obligation (because of the responsibility) is at least equally great when entrusted by the Public.

After all, as the season is now far advanced, houses, in the situation I have described as most eligable, may not be to be rented. I am not unwilling that the removal of the *Commissioners* if they find much inconvenience in doing it, may be suspended untill the commencement of the operations of next Spring, when it will certainly be expected; and if known, I have *no* doubt but that houses will be prepared for their accommodation by that time.

You will from the length of this letter, with difficulty give credit to my assertion in the beginning of it; but as a proof, not only of its verity, but of the friendship and candour with which it is written, it shall go to you in its present rough garb; and with all its imperfections, accompanied with assurances of the esteem and regard, &c.[32]

*To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

Mount Vernon, July 4, 1796.

Sir: Your letter of the 28th. Ulto. with its enclosures, was received by the Mail on friday. I wanted no delay in the

[32]In the writing of George Washington Craik in *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress. The words in brackets are in the writing of Washington.

Commissioning of Mr. Jno. Davis, to be Attorney for the District of Massachusetts; if to you, or those who were better acquainted with his professional knowledge (before he embarked in the Comptrollership) than I am, thought them competent to the duties thereof.

That an entire Section of a Bill which had passed both Houses of Congress should be omitted in copying of it; and that such omission should have escaped the Committee of Inrolment; is a circumstance so singular in its nature as scarcely to have a parallel.[33] being desirous however, of carrying the *intentions* of the Legislature into effect, I have, though I confess not willingly, endeavoured to supply the defect by the Executive Act which is herewith enclosed. The consequences that might result from delay, have produced this Act on my part; otherwise, as its operation is to be Exterior I should have hesitated longer, before the signature was given; if at all.[34]

By the last Mail, I received a Letter from the Governor of Pennsylvania, requesting "that I would direct such co-operative measures, on the part of the Officers of the United States, as may effectually counteract the danger, wch. is apprehended from Vessels holding an intercourse with the shores of New Jersey, in evasion of the Quarantine prescribed under the

[33] Wolcott had written (June 28): "A novel and very perplexing question has arisen in respect to the Act of Congress of the last Session for the relief and protection of american seamen. It seems that an entire section of the bill as it passed the House of Representatives, has been omitted in the Act, although the Act has still a reference to what was struck out. by this defect the fourth section of the existing Law is deemed incapable of being executed. After much consideration and different views of the subject; and pursuant to the advice and opinion of Council, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of War and myself have thought that the object of the Law can be properly attained by the interposition of the Executive. The form of an act which is proposed to be sent to the Collectors of the Customs has been therefore prepared and is herewith submitted to the President's decision." Wolcott's letter is entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*

[34] No draft, or copy, of this Executive Order is now found in the *Washington Papers*. A copy of the Treasury circular to Collectors of Customs, July 19, 1796, containing the Executive's general instructions in the matter is in *Treasury Circulars, 1789–96*, in the Manuscripts Division of the Library of Congress.

authority of the Laws of this State." I expected, from what passed previous to my leaving Philadelphia, that circular orders had issued, long since, to the Collectors of the different Ports; and to the Officers commanding the fortifications of our Harbours, to afford *such* aid, agreeably to the Act of Congress relative to Quarantine. As there are two letters from the Governor on the same subject, I shall send both of them by this days Post, to the Secretary of State; and desire that if any thing needful, remains to be done, that orders to that end may issue immediately. [C. H. S.]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, July 4, 1796.

Sir: The Spanish Minister, Mr. de Yrujo[35] spent two days with me, and is just gone. I caused it to be intimated to him that as I should be absent from the seat of the Government until the middle, or latter end of August, that I was ready to receive his letter of credence at this place. He answered (as I understood it) that his credentials were with his baggage on its passage to Philadelphia; and that his reception at that place, at the time mentioned, would be perfectly convenient and agreeable to himself. He is a young man, very free and easy in his manners; professes to be well disposed towards the United States; and as far as a judgment can be formed on so short an acquaintance, appears to be well informed.

Enclosed are two letters from the Governor of Pennsylvania, applying for the aid of the general government to execute effectually the quarantine he had proclaimed. I left Philadelphia under an impression that circular letters had been written by the Secretary of the Treasury to the Collectors of the different ports, and by the Secretary of War to the officers commanding

[35] Carlos Martinez, Marquis de Casa Yrujo.

the Garrisons on the sea-board, to pay proper attention to the act of Congress relative to Quarantine.

From the application of Govr. Mifflin, the presumption is, that there has been an omission somewhere. Let me desire that you, and the other two gentlemen[36] would meet, and see where it lies, that a remedy may be immediately applied. And I request that you will acknowledge the receipt of the Governor's letters and inform him of what is, or will be done.

I desire to be informed also, if any thing is, or can be done relatively to the appointment of an Indian Agent, in place of Governor Blount; and others for carrying on the trade authorized by Congress with those people.[37]

*To THOMAS JEFFERSON

Mount Vernon, July 6, 1796.

Dear Sir: When I inform you, that your letter of the 19th. Ulto.[38] went to Philadelphia and returned to this place before it was received by me; it will be admitted, I am persuaded, as an apology for my not having acknowledged the receipt of it sooner.

If I had entertained any suspicions before, that the queries, which have been published in Bache's Paper,[39] proceeded from you, the assurances you have given of the contrary, would have removed them; but the truth is, I harboured none. I am at no loss to *conjecture* from what source they flowed; through what channel they were conveyed; and for what purpose they and similar publications, appear. They were known to be in the hands of Mr. Parker,[40] in the early part of the last Session of

[36] Of the Cabinet; namely, Wolcott and McHenry.
[37] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[38] In the *Washington Papers*.
[39] See "Questions submitted by the President" to the Cabinet, Apr. 18, 1793 (vol. 32).
[40] Josiah Parker, Representative from Virginia.

Congress; They were shown about by Mr. Giles[41] during the Cession, and they made their public exhibition about the close of it.

Perceiving, and probably, hearing, that no abuse in the Gazettes would induce me to take notice of anonymous publications, against me; those who were disposed to do me *such friendly Offices,* have embraced without restraint every opportunity to weaken the confidence of the People; and, by having the *whole* game in their hands, they have scrupled not to publish things that do not, as well as those which do exist; and to mutilate the latter, so as to make them subserve the purposes which they have in view.

As you have mentioned the subject yourself, it would not be frank, candid, or friendly to conceal, that your conduct has been represented as derogatory from that opinion *I* had conceived you entertained of me. That to your particular friends and connextions you have described, and they have denounced me, as a person under a dangerous influence; and that, if I would listen *more* to some *other* opinions, all would be well. My answer invariably has been, that I had never discovered any thing in the conduct of Mr. Jefferson to raise suspicions, in my mind, of his insincerity; that if he would retrace my public conduct while he was in the Administration, abundant proofs would occur to him, that truth and right decisions, were the *sole* objects of my pursuit; that there were as many instances within his *own* knowledge of my having decided *against,* as in *favor of* the opinions of the person[42] evidently alluded to; and moreover, that I was no believer in the infallibility of the politics, or measures of *any man living.* In short, that I was no party man myself, and the first wish of my heart was, if parties did exist, to reconcile them.

[41] William Branch Giles, Representative from Virginia.
[42] Alexander Hamilton.

To this I may add, and very truly, that, until within the last year or two ago, I had no conception that Parties would, or even could go, the length I have been witness to; nor did I believe until lately, that it was within the bonds of probability; hardly within those of possibility, that, while I was using my utmost exertions to establish a national character of our own, independent, as far as our obligations, and justice would permit, of every nation of the earth; and wished, by steering a steady course, to preserve this Country from the horrors of a desolating war, that I should be accused of being the enemy of one Nation, and subject to the influence of another; and to prove it, that every act of my administration would be tortured, and the grossest, and most insidious mis-representations of them be made (by giving one side *only* of a subject, and that too in such exaggerated and indecent terms as could scarcely be applied to a Nero; a notorious defaulter; or even to a common pick-pocket). But enough of this; I have already gone farther in the expression of my feelings, than I intended.

The particulars of the case you mention (relative to the Little Sarah) is a good deal out of my recollection at present, and I have no public papers here to resort to. When I get back to Philadelphia (which, unless I am called there by something new, will not be 'till towards the last of August) I will examine my files.[43]

It must be pleasing to a Cultivator, to possess Land which will yield Clover kindly; for it is certainly a great Desiderata in Husbandry. My Soil, without very good dressings, does not produce it well: owing, I believe, to its stiffness; hardness at bottom; and retention of Water. A farmer, in my opinion, need never despair of raising Wheat to advantage, upon a Clover

[43] On August 28 Washington wrote to Jefferson, according to this promise, inclosing copies of the papers the latter had requested. This letter is entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

lay; with a single ploughing, agreeably to the Norfolk and Suffolk practice. By a misconception of my Manager last year, a field at one of my Farms which I intended shd. have been fallowed for Wheat, went untouched. Unwilling to have my crop of Wheat at that place so much reduced, as would have been occasioned by this omission, I directed, as soon as I returned from Philadelphia (about the middle of September) another field, not in the usual rotation, which had lain out two years, and well covered with mixed grasses, principally white clover, to be turned over with a good Bar-share; and the Wheat to be sown, and harrowed in at the tail of the Plough. It was done so accordingly, and was, by odds, the best Wheat I made this year. It exhibits an unequivocal proof to my mind, of the great advantage of Clover lay, for Wheat. Our Crops of this article, hereabouts, are more or less injured by what some call the Rot; others the Scab; occasioned, I believe, by high winds and beating rain when the grain is in blossom, and before the Farina has performed its duties.

Desirous of trying the field Peas of England, and the Winter Vetch, I sent last fall to Mr. Marray[44] of Liverpool for 8 bushels of each sort. Of the Peas he sent me two kinds (a white and dark, but not having the letter by me, I am unable to give the names). They did not arrive until the latter end of April; when they ought to have been in the ground the beginning of March. They were sown however, but will yield no Seed; of course the experiment I intended to make, is lost. The Vetch is yet on hand for Autumn Seeding. That the Albany Peas will grow well with us, I know from my own experience: but they are subject to the same bug which perforates, and injures the Garden Peas, and will do the same, I fear, to the imported Peas, of any sort from England, in this climate, from the heat of it.

[44] Maury.

I do not know what is meant by, or to what uses the Caroline drill is applied. How does your Chicorium prosper? Four years since I exterminated all the Plants raised from Seed sent me by Mr. Young, and to get into it again, the seed I purchased in Philadelphia last Winter, and what has been sent me by Mr. Murray this Spring, has cost me upwards of twelve pounds Sterling. This, it may be observed, is a left handed way to make money; but the first was occasioned by the manager I then had, who pretended to know it well in England and pronounced it a noxious weed; the restoration of it, is indebted to Mr. Strickland and others (besides Mr. Young) who speak of it in exalted terms. I sowed mine broad-cast; some with and some without grain. It has come up well; but there seems to be a serious struggle between *it* and the grass and weeds; the issue of which (as I can afford no relief to the former) is doubtful at present, and may be useful to know.

If you can bring a moveable threshing Machine, constructed upon simple principles to perfection, it will be among the most valuable institutions in this Country; for nothing is more wanting, and to be wished for on our farms. Mrs. Washington begs you to accept her best wishes, and with very great esteem etc.[45]

*To THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Mount Vernon, July 6, 1796.

Sir: Having shewn you the answr of the French Minister, to the communication of the Secretary of State, relatively to the Capture of the Ship Mount Vernon, by the French Privateer Flying Fish. Having read you also, the contents of a letter from ———[46] respecting information from St. Domingo, of the

[45] From the *Jefferson Papers* in the Library of Congress.

[46] Monsieur Santhonax. Quoted by Alexander Hamilton in his letter to Washington (not dated), but received and filed under date of June 23, 1796, in the *Washington Papers*.

intended measures of the French government, to Harrass our Commerce with Great Britain; and also my letter to the Secretary of State on that Subject; to which I have, by the last Mail, received the enclosed acknowledgment: Let me now ask what you think of the opinion therein given, respecting the recall of our Minister at Paris? Whether *that* act will authorise the appointment of an Envoy Extraordinary, or Minister Plenipotentiary? Whether it is, in that case, expedient to do it under *present* circumstances, as far as they are known, or await a further developement of his conduct and the views of the Directory of France? [47] And in case it is judged expedient to send a Person to Paris, to explain the motives for the conduct of this government, and to ascertain the views of that, Whether you think either of the Characters mentioned in the Secretary of State's letter would go? and whether there be any other occurring to

[47] The queries had already been decided by the Cabinet meeting of July 2, which report had not then reached Washington. It was, in part, "that the Executive has not the power, in the recess of the Senate, to originate the appointment of a *minister extraordinary* to France; and that the recall of Mr. Monroe, by creating a vacancy, can alone authorize the sending of a new Minister to that Country. On the expediency of this change we are agreed. We think the great interests of the United States require that they have near the French Government some faithful organ to explain their real views and to ascertain those of the French. Our duty obliges us to be explicit. Altho' the present Minister plenipotentiary of the United States at Paris has been amply furnished with documents to explain the views and conduct of the United States, yet his own letters authorize us to say, that he has omitted to use them, and thereby exposed the U States to all the mischiefs which could flow from jealousies and erroneous conceptions of their views and conduct. Whether this dangerous omission arose from such an attachment to the cause of France as rendered him too little mindful of the interests of his own Country, or from mistaken views of the latter, or from any other cause, the evil is the same. We therefore conceive it to be indispensably necessary that the present Minister plenipotentiary of the United States at Paris should be recalled, and another American citizen appointed in his stead. Such being our opinion, we beg leave to name for your consideration Patrick Henry and John Marshall of Virginia, and Charles Cotesworth Pinckney and William Smith of South Carolina; either of whom would, we believe, so explain the conduct and views of the U. States as to satisfy the French Republic, and thereby remove the danger of a rupture or inconvenient controversy with that nation; or failing of this desirable effect, to satisfy the Citizens of the U States that the fault was not to be imputed to their own Government.

"In confirmation of our opinion of the expediency of recalling Mr. Monroe, we think the occasion requires that we communicate a private letter from him which came to our hands since you left Philadelphia. This letter corresponds with other

you as eligable? Would Doctr. McClerg[48] go? and does he possess fit abilities if he would accept?

Answer all these queries as soon as you conveniently can. And let me have the draught you promised (on Monday last) for the purpose of supplying the deficiency in the Act for the relief of Seamen.

Make frequent inquiries for a fit character to fill the Office of Surveyor General. I wish much to have it ably executed.

*To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

Mount Vernon, July 6, 1796.

Sir: When the letter herewith enclosed, dated the 4th. instant was written in answer to yours of the 28th. Ulto; part of it, as you will perceive, was dictated under the impression of much hesitation and doubt; for I am not fond of rectifying Legislative

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intelligence of his political opinions and conduct. A minister who has thus made the notorious enemies of the whole system of the government his confidential correspondents in matters which affect that Government, cannot be relied on to do his duty to the latter. This private letter we received in confidence. Among other circumstances that will occur to your recollection, the anonymous letters from France to Thos. Blount and others are very noticeable. We know that Montflorence was the writer, and that he was the Chancellor of the Consul Skipwith; and from the connexion of Mr. Monroe with those persons, we can entertain no doubt that the anonymous letters were written with his privity.

"These anonymous communications from officers of the United States in a foreign Country, on matters of a public nature, and which deeply concern the interests of the United States, in relation to that foreign Country, are proofs of sinister designs, and shew that the public interests are no longer safe in the hands of such men.

"The information contained in the confidential communication you were pleased to make to us on the project of the French Government relative to the Commerce of the U States, is confirmed by the open publication of the same substantially and more minutely in the News-papers. Mr. Fenno's in which it first appeared, we now enclose. The execution of the project even appears to have been commenced. The following article is in Mr. Fenno's paper of the 28th Ulto.

"'New London June 23d. Arrived brig *Aurora,* S. Wadsworth of Hartford, in fourteen days from port-au paix. Left there sloop *Crisis,* Cook of Norwich, with mules; sloop *Scrub,* Williams of Middletown; and a brig from Philadelphia; all carried in by French privateers. It was not pretended to make prizes of them; but their Cargoes were taken by the administration, at their own price, and due-bills given therefor. Those who go there to trade and those carried in, are all treated alike. Capt. Wadsworth received a due bill for 11,000 livres.'"

[48] Dr. James McClurg (McClerg), of Virginia.

mistakes by Executive Acts. I determined however to take the Attorney General opinion on the case:[49] resolving, if it accorded with those which had been sent me, to give the Act you forwarded, my signature.

For this purpose I requested that his opinion might be *fully* stated to me in *writing* and delivered at Alexandria on the 4th. where I had promised to be at the celebration of the Anniversary of Independence; that I might, by the Post of next day, or rather the Mail of that evening, if his opinion had not a tendency to increase my own doubts, forward the Act to you. Knowing, that neither time nor opportunity would be allowed at a crowded meeting, to write, I prepared my letter in the morning, before I left home, on the supposition of a concurrence; and in that case, that I might have nothing to do but to sign and enclose the Act; but his opinion being adverse to this (as you will see by the enclosure, which I request may be returned to me) I declined doing it; and have desired him to draught something anew. This, when it comes to hand, (wch. I expected would have been in time for this days Post) shall be sent.[50] [C.H.S.]

*To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

(Private)

Mount Vernon, July 6, 1796.

Dear Sir: Your private letter (without date) by the last Post, has been received.

It is quite agreeable to me, that my Wine should remain in the Store of Messrs. Willing & Francis, till I shall have occasion to remove it.

[49] The Attorney General's opinion, dated July 4, is in the *Washington Papers*.
[50] The later opinion is dated July 7, and is also in the *Washington Papers*.

There is little doubt, but the insertion in Browns Paper,[51] of my sudden return, was put there to answer some insiduous purpose; for sure I am, nothing ever dropped from me to authorise such a publication. and it is to be regretted that the authors of them could not be brot to light.

A Report has circulated here, that the William Penn has been captured by the Flying-Fish; but as it is of some days standing, and your letter is silent on the subject I hope it is void of foundation. That Mr. Bache will continue his attacks on the Government, there can be no doubt, but that they will make no Impression on the public mind is not so certain, for drops of Water will Impress (in time) the hardest Marble.

I hear with concern, that the New Stock is likely to remain unsold, notwithstanding the long credit which was offered. Let the expedient (whatever it be) be well considered.

If any thing should occur of an interesting nature altho' it should not require official communication let me hear it. With very great esteem etc. [C. H. S.]

To THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Mount Vernon, July 7, 1796.

Sir: Consider the enclosed papers,[52] which came by the post of yesterday, as *entirely* and *absolutely* confidential. Read them attentively, and let me see and converse with you on the contents of them this evening, or very early tomorrow morning.[53]

[51] Andrew Brown. He was publisher of *The Philadelphia Gazette and Universal Daily Advertiser.*

[52] The papers concerned Monroe's conduct in France and the question of his recall.

[53] Lee's written opinion is dated Alexandria, July 7: "I had formed an opinion that our minister plenipotentiary at Paris, ought not to be permitted to continue there, any longer than until the arrival of his Successor; and that it was not only expedient but absolutely necessary that he should be recalled and another minister appointed. Upon this subject I concur in Sentiment with the heads of departments as expressed in their letter of the 4th. instant." Lee's letter is in the *Washington Papers.*

that time may be allowed me to prepare my dispatches for the post office in the afternoon.[54]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, July 8, 1796.

Sir: My letters to the Secretary of the Treasury, of the 4th. and 6th. instant, with the present enclosure, convey fully the sentiments of the Attorney General with respect to the best mode of executing the act "for the relief and protection of American seamen." He has, since his opinion was transmitted in the above letter of the 6th, consulted two of our most eminent lawyers in these parts, and finds an entire accordance of opinion. I request therefore that the measure recommended may be pursued.[55]

Your letters of the 1st and 2d. instant, with several enclosures in the latter came safe and duly to hand. After that serious consideration which the subject deserves, I have determined to recall the American Minister at Paris, and am taking measures to supply his place; but, the more the latter is resolved, the greater the difficulties appear, to do it ably and unexceptionably. By this I mean one, who will promote, not thwart the neutral policy of the Government; and at the same time will not be obnoxious to the people among whom he is sent.

Proofs, little short of positive, are already in my possession, that neither Mr. Henry nor Mr. Marshall would accept of such an appointment. The chances against Genl. Pinckney's doing it are strong, tho' not quite so great; and, with respect to Mr. Smith, altho' it would be a very agreeable choice to me, I am sure it would not concenter those opinions which policy would

[54] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[55] See note to the letter to the Secretary of the Treasury, July 4, 1796, *ante*.

require. Mr. Carroll, of Carrolton, tho' sensible and attached to federal measures, would find himself on quite new ground, and besides, he has such large concerns of his own to attend to, and is so tenacious of them, that it is morally certain he would not be prevailed on to go.

Having taken this view of the subject, I am by this day's post writing to Genl. Pinckney. This letter I shall enclose to Mr. Marshall (as he is in the line, Mr. Henry being much out of it) to be forwarded, or returned, as he shall decide with respect to himself. In the mean time, as the offer ends with Genl. Pinckney, other characters should be held in contemplation, in case of his refusal.

The Letter to the Minister plenipotentiary of France, in Philada. appears to be well conceived, and is accordingly approved. The transmitted copy of Mr. Monroe's letter[56] to ——[57] must be erroneously dated "Paris, June 24, *1796*." I presume it is in the year, and should be *1795*.

*To JOHN MARSHALL

(Private)

Mount Vernon, July 8, 1796.

Dear Sir: In confidence I inform you, that it has become indispensably necessary to recall our Minister at Paris; and to

[56] This was one of the letters removed by William B. Sprague from the *Washington Papers* when they were in the possession of Jared Sparks. The copy in the *Washington Papers* is in Sprague's writing. Monroe wrote: "I give you within a short sketch of the actual state of things here, a copy of which I likewise send to one or two other friends of whom Mr. Beckley is one. If you and Mr. Beckley, if in Philadelphia, deem it worthy the attention, I have no objection to your inserting it in Bache's paper, the first paragraph excepted. And if you likewise approve, I will hereafter keep you regularly apprized of the course of events, whereby the community at large may be more correctly informed of the progress of the revolution than they heretofore have been or can be from the English prints." Monroe's letter was forwarded to Washington with the opinion of the Cabinet of July 2, 1796.

[57] Dr. George Logan.

send one in his place who will explain, faithfully, the views of this government, and ascertain those of France.

Nothing would be more pleasing to me, than that you should be this Organ; if it were only for a temporary absence of a few months. But it being feared that even this could not be made to comport with your present pursuits, I have, in order that as little delay as possible may be incurred, put the enclosed letter undercover to be forwarded to its address, if you decline the present offer; or to be returned to me, if you accept it.[58]

Your own correct knowledge of circumstances render details unnecessary, I shall only add therefore that, I am, etc.

P. S. Hearing that you propose to attend the next meeting of the Supreme Court in Philadelphia I should be glad to see you at this place in your way.[59]

*To CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY

(Private and confidential)

Mount Vernon, July 8, 1796.

My dear Sir: The situation of Affairs, and the interests of this Country as they relate to France, render it indispensably necessary that a faithful Organ near that government, able and willing to explain its views, and to ascertain those of France, should immediately fill the place of our present Minister Plenipotentiary at Paris.

Policy requires that this character should be well attached to the government of his own country; and not obnoxious to the one to which he is sent, to be essentially serviceable. Where then can a man be found that would answer this description better than yourself?

[58] Marshall declined. His letter of July 11 is in the *Washington Papers*.
[59] From a facsimile in a sales catalogue, 1920.

It is a fact too notorious to be denied, that the greatest embarrassments under which the Administration of this government labours, proceed from the counteraction of people among ourselves; who are more disposed to promote the views of another, than to establish a national character of their own; and that unless the virtuous, and independent men of this country will come forward, it is not difficult to predict the consequences. Such is my decided opinion.

After what has passed between us on former occasions (respecting your filling some of the important Offices in our government) I must confess that I hesitated, before I resolved on this Address; lest you might think I was too importunate; and that your former answers ought to have superceded the desire of making it.

Had not the case been important and urgent, I might have hesitated longer; but in finding a character of the description I have mentioned, you will be at no loss to perceive the difficulty which occurs. He must be a man whose abilities, and celebrity of character are well known to the people of this country;[60] and who ought, as far as the nature of the case will admit, be acceptable to all parties. Doubtless many such there are; but those who have been, either in the Executive or Legislative Departments of the General government, and are best known to me, have been so decisive in their Politics, and, possibly, so frank and public in their declarations, as to render it very difficult to chuse from among them one, in whom the confidence of this Country could be placed, and the prejudices of the others not excited.

Thus, my good Sir, you have a candid exposition of my sentiments and wishes. I have only to add to them a request, that

[60] At this point the "Letter Book" copy has "whose honor and integrity are unimpeached."

you would be so obliging as to give me a prompt answer.[61] And if in the affirmative, that you would repair to Philadelphia, prepared to proceed on the Mission, with as little delay as can be avoided. Possibly, you might have less objection to the excursion, if it would occasion a few months absence only, than to a permanent residence. But the Power of the Executive (in the recess of the Senate) extends only to the filling of vacancies; and one will be occasioned by the recall of the present incumbent; a measure resolved on. It is unnecessary to add how much, and how sincerely I am &c.[62]

*To CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY

Mount Vernon, July 8, 1796.

My dear Sir: Sincerely commisseratg. the distresses of the Citizens of Charleston, occasioned by the late unfortunate fires; I take the liberty of offering through you, my mite towards their relief without any desire of having my name mentioned.[63]

With affecte. regard I am etc.

To JUDGE ALEXANDER ADDISON

Mount Vernon, July 8, 1796.

Sir: Your favor of the 4th. Instant came to my hand by last Post.

When I inform you that Mr. Ross (who on my behalf disposed of the Land I held on Millers run, to Mr. Ritchie) is authorised to do all that is necessary on my part, toward carrying

[61] Pinckney accepted the appointment. His letter of July 27 is in the *Washington Papers*.

[62] From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach, of New York City.

[63] $300 were inclosed.

the bargain into complete effect; it almost supercedes the necessity of giving answers, in detail, to the queries you have propounded. I shall however inform you.

That three thousand dollars has been received by me, on that account.

That I executed a deed conveying the Estate in fee Simple with a relinquishment of Dower, to Mr. Ritchie; and left it in trust with Mr. Ross, to be delivered when the requisites on the part of Mr. Ritchie were complied with.

That if Mr. Ritchie should be disposed to pay a greater sum, not less than a third *more* than the Installment becoming due, it shall be received, provided notice thereof is given on, or before the first day of April in each year. and

That, a decisive answer has already been given (through Mr. Ross) of my expectation of Interest from the first of January.

With respect to the Rents of the Land on Millers run, not knowing when, by agreement, they become due; and in truth, being very little acquainted with the circumstances attending them, it would be imprudent in me to say anything definitely concerning them: whatever, therefore, Mr. Ross may do in this regard, I will abide by; as I seek justice only, on liberal principles.

The money due on account of interest to the first of June, may be deposited with the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Wolcott and, as it was in Philadelphia soon after that period, I require no interest thereon subsequent thereto. I believe it would be best also, at this time, not to receive money on any other account: lest it should militate with arrangements under a power given to Mr. Ross. I have no doubt but that a judgment Bond executed by Mr. Ritchie and yourself will be perfectly satisfactory, but every thing of this sort is already in the hands of Mr. Ross to arrange.

The Survey has been returned to me, and the quantity I believe (not having it at hand) is as you say, 2955 Acres. I am etc.[64] [H.L.]

To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Mount Vernon, July 8, 1796.

Dear Sir: Having written a great many letters for this day's Post, and being a good deal fatigued thereby and with the heat of the weather, I shall do no more at present than to inform you that your letters of the 2d. and 3d. instant with the enclosures of the first came perfectly safe, and that my letter to the Secretary of State, of this date, will inform you confidentially of my decision with respect to the recall of Col. M—— and the measures which I am pursuing to provide a Successor.

I am sorry to hear you have been [un]well and glad to hear you are better. Keep so. One well day is worth a dozen sick ones. I am, etc.[65]

*To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

(Private)

Mount Vernon, July 11, 1796.

Dear Sir: Your private letter of the 5th. instant, with its enclosures, has been received.

Mr. Adet was as cordially, and as repeatedly asked to visit Mount Vernon as either of the other foreign characters; but to *me,* he never said he would come. LaFayette and Mr. Frestal however, the day before I left Philadelphia, understood *him* that he should set out on this visit in ten days after me; since which I have heard nothing of him.

[64] This copy, in the writing of George Washington Craik, is indorsed by Washington.
[65] From a copy in the *McHenry Photostats* in the Library of Congress.

It was my determination, and so I acted, to place them all upon precisely the same ground; but as there are many who will not be *disposed* to think so. but on the contrary, will, more than probably, represent it otherwise, it will be very agreeable to me, that you should see and express to him, on my behalf, the sentiments which are mentioned in your letter: predicated on the hope, raised in me, by the Gentlemen before mentioned. With sincere esteem etc.[66]

To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

Mount Vernon, July 11, 1796.

Sir: Your Letter of the 5th instant came duly to hand. The preparatory arrangements for the sale of the Lands, remaining unsold, in the seven ranges of Townships in the No Western territory being complete; I think from the accounts given of George Wallace, he would be a suitable character for the trust of superintending the sales at Pittsburgh in conjunction with the Governor or secretary of the North W. Territory, and desire he may be empowered accordingly. Genl. John Nevill is, I conceive, a fit person to receive the money proceeding from the sales, and that from his *other* public employment he *ought* to do it upon more œconomical terms, and if he will do it, let him be appointed thereto.[67]

To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Mount Vernon, July 11, 1796.

Sir: Your letter of the 6th. instant, with copies of other letters to the Secretaries of State, and Treasury; respecting the charges exhibited by Brigadier Wilkinson against General Wayne, has

[66] From the *McHenry Photostats* in the Library of Congress.
[67] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

been received; and when an opinion is formed thereon, I shall expect to receive it.

I know of nothing, at present, that will prevent my being in Philadelphia between the 15th. of August and first of September: As then, there will be abundant time between that period and the 31st. of October (when the new Military Establishment is to take place) to arrange the Officers to the several Corps; and as much information may be obtained, and many things cast up between this and then to lessen the difficulty, and obtain relief from the disagreeable task of *deranging* Officers I am induced to postpone a final decision in this case 'till I return to the Seat of Government, unless there are causes which do not occur to me, to require it sooner; of which you will not fail to inform me.[68]

To JOHN DANDRIDGE

Mount Vernon, July 11, 1796.

Dear Sir: I have received, at this place your letter of the 23d Ulto; but long after the date of it. Whether occasioned by neglect in the Post Offices or by its having made a journey to Philadelphia and back, I know not.

With respect to the negroes, Frederick, George, Burwell and Pleasant, I have no objection to your taking them with you to your new habitation, Provided you can arrange matters with your mother, to her entire satisfaction. I shall set no price on them, because it is not probable I shall ever avail myself, or heirs, of that property in your mothers possession.

Your brother Bart[69] conduct is too enigmatical for me to develope; I have conjecture only to resort to, for a solution of it: and as that might prove erroneous I shall say nothing

[68] In the writing of George Washington Craik.
[69] Bartholomew Dandridge.

concerning the causes, further than that I have no charges to make against his honesty or fidelity, and that his sudden and abrupt departure, was not occasioned by any difference between us, and further that I had no more suspicion of his intention to leave me, (until he was gone and left a line informing me thereof) than you had. His first letter to me, (four days after he had left the family) requested I would harbour no unfavorable opinion of him, intimating that when he was more composed, he would write me more fully, and give some explanation of his conduct. A second and a third letter has been recd. from him since (dates at Green bryer Ct House) without doing this, but expressing an inclination to return to his former station, which cannot be as another Gentn. has taken his place. If however I can render him any service I shall do it chearfully, as I always entertained and continue to entertain a favourable opinion of his integrity and abilities.

With best regard to your mother and other friends I am etc.

PS. Since closing this letter your brother Bar has arrived here, and as he is writing to you or some other of his friends, I shall refer you to his own explanations which ought to be the most accurate.[70]

*To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

(Private)

Mount Vernon, July 13, 1796.

Dear Sir: The purport of your private letter, of the 7th. instant (that part of it I mean, which relates to the Frigate for the Regency of Algiers) has surprised me exceedingly.

That no step yet, should have been taken to carry this measure into vigorous execution; and that it should be asked, nearly

[70] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

six weeks after it had been resolved to comply with the Deys request, and an actual stipulation of our Agent, or Agents there; by what Department it is to be carried into effect? is, on account of the delay which has been occasioned (if contrary to the Ideas which have been communicated to the Dey, and Colo. Humphreys) extremely unpleast.

Disagreeable as this requisition was found in its reception, and more so in the compliance with it; yet, as there appeared no other alternative but to comply, or submit to the depredations of the Barbary Corsairs on our Citizens, and Commerce, the former was preferred: and I had no doubt (after pressing as often, and as earnestly as I did before I left Philadelphia, that all matters requiring my opinions, or Acts, might be laid before me) that every thing relative to this Frigate was in a perfect train of Execution, agreeably to whatever assurances had been given, by Captain OBrian.[71]

If the Laws establishing the different Departments (I have them not be me) does not expressly, or by analogy, designate the one to which the care of such business is entrusted, I must, no doubt, assign it; but where these speak, it is best for me to be silent.

If the building of this Vessel could have been suspended until the meeting of Congress, for the Agency of the Senate, the answer to the Dey might have been suspended also. But to avert, if possible, the disagreeable consequences of delay, a prompt decision was come to; and Captn. O'Brian hurried off with the result. This decision, and the letters which he carried, ought to be resorted to; and the measures accorded thereto, strictly.

Whether it will be best to purchase a Ship ready built, if one fit for the purpose can be had (and such an one on the Stocks

[71] Capt. Richard O'Brien (O'Brian). He was, later, United States Consul General at Algiers.

at Philadelphia was talked of); whether to contract for the building and equipping of one (some of the materials being found) if entire confidence can be placed in the Undertaker; or whether to furnish the materials (in which case all that can be spared from our own Frigates ought, unquestionably, to be applied) and pay for the building; depends upon enquiries not within my power at this time, and place to make; and must, therefore, be a matter of investigation, and consultation among yourselves; especially with the Secretary of the Treasury, on the means.

Before I conclude, let me, in a friendly way, impress the following maxims upon the Executive Officers. In all important matters, to deliberate maturely, but to execute promptly and vigorously. And not to put things off until the Morrow which can be done, and require to be done, to day. Without an adherence to these rules, business never will be *well* done, or done in an easy manner; but will always be in arrear, with one thing treading upon the heels of another. With very great, &c.[72]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

(Private and confidential)

Mount Vernon, July 13, 1796.

Sir: Yesterday I was informed by a gentleman from Richmond, that Mr. Dawson[73] was gone on to Philada. in order to embark for France; and about an hour ago I received a letter, from which the enclosed is an extract, from a well informed acquaintance and a staunch friend to his Country.

What, or whether anything can with propriety be done in consequence of this information, must be left to yourself and

[72] From the *McHenry Photostats* in the Library of Congress.
[73] John Dawson.

the two other Secretaries to decide, from circumstances and appearances on the spot. It may not be amiss to observe further that Mr. Dawson is the son-in-law of Mr. Jones[74] (one of the Circuit Judges of this State and as I am informed, unfriendly to the Genl. Government) that Mr. Monroe is the Nephew of Mr. Jones, and has his son with him in France.

As every day brings forth matter to view, vigilance, with caution becomes more and more necessary.[75]

*To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

Mount Vernon, July 13, 1796.

Sir: The contract entered into between William Allibone, Superintendent of the Light House establishment for the Bay of Delaware, and Garret Hulsecamp, for placing and managing the floating Beacons and Buoys in the said Bay, of Delaware, is returned approved.

It is to be presumed that these contracts are not more frequent than necessary; yet, as they are so often repeated; and are heavy in the aggregate, for the above mentioned Bay; it may not be inexpedient to make indirect enquiries whether these frequent renewals are the result of *real* necessity. And to what account the old materials are carried. [C.H.S.]

*To JOHN MARSHALL

(Private)

Mount Vernon, July 15, 1796.

Dear Sir: I have received your letter of the 11th instant, and regret that present circumstances should deprive our country of

[74] Joseph Jones.
[75] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

the Services which I am confident your going to France, at this time, would have rendered it. It is difficult to fill some Offices with characters which would fit them in all respects. Another case of this sort is now before me: namely, that of Surveyor General. A gentleman well qualified to discharge the duties of this Office was appointed, but has declined accepting it. Several others have been mentioned, but the recommendations of them have gone more to the general respectability of their characters than their Scientific knowledge; whilst both are equally essential. For it is a trust, which in the execution, requires skill to arrange, instruct, Inspect and report correctly, the conduct of others; and integrity to resist the temptation which opportunities, and an overweening fondness for speculation in Lands, may throw in his way. Among the characters from the State of Virginia who have been presented to my view, on this occasion, are Generals Wood and Posey, and Colonels Tinsley[76] and Anderson; the last of whom is, I believe, an inhabitant of Kentucky; and having been in that line, the presumption ought to be, that his mathematical knowledge (which should extend beyond common Surveying) is adequate to the duties which would be required. But how he is in other respects, and what may be the course of his politics, I know *nothing;* and but *little* of those of the other three; particularly of Tinsley's. The object therefore of writing this letter to you, is, to ask confidentially, such information as you possess, can acquire, and give me respecting the qualifications of the Gentlemen; or of any other fit character that may occur to you for Surveyor General; accordant with the ideas I have expressed above. The Office is important and respectable; of course the incumbent besides his scientific abilities, should possess a celebrity of character that would justify the appointment. To learn

[76] James Wood, Thomas Posey, and Thomas Tinsley.

your sentiments of the characters, and on the points I have mentioned, will be in time when I shall have the pleasure of seeing you, on your way to Philadelphia.

With very great esteem etc.

To JAMES KEITH

Mount Vernon, July 17, 1796.

Dear Sir: You will perceive by the enclosed letter from Mr. Bushrod Washington to me, what is enjoined by the High Court of Chancery of this Commonwealth.

By Mr. George W. Craik, I send in Bank Notes of the United States, the Sum required to be deposited in the Bank of Alexandria, by the decree. Had I known of this decree before I left Philadelphia I could, and would have drawn the Specie for this purpose; and I think, to avoid any caval hereafter, the receipt from the Bank of Alexandria ought to be expressed in such a manner as to imply this, or rather not to imply the contrary; and this it may well do, for the presumption is, that this

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From an extract of Benjamin H. Latrobe's diary, July 16, 1796, describing his visit to Mount Vernon: "The President came to me. He was dressed in a plain blue coat, his hair dressed and powdered. There was a reserve, but no hauteur, in his manner. . . . I told him of the silver mine at Rocketts. He laughed most heartily at the very mention of the thing. . . . He made several very minute enquiries concerning it, and then said 'It would give him real uneasiness should any silver or gold be discovered that would tempt considerable capital into the prosecution of that object, and that he heartily wished for his country that it might contain no mines, but those that the plough could reach excepting only coal and iron.' . . . Dinner was served at about half past three . . . he placed me at the left hand of Mrs. Washington, Miss Custis seated at her right, and himself next to her about the middle of the table. There was very little conversation during dinner. A few jokes passed between the President and young Lafayette whom he treats more like a child than a guest. I felt a little embarrassed at the quiet reserved air that prevailed. As I drink no wine and the President drank only three glasses, the party soon returned to the Portico. . . . Coffee was brought about six oclock. . . . Breakfast was served up in the usual Virginia style, tea coffee and cold boiled meat; and for an hour afterwards he [Washington] stood on the steps of the west door talking to the Company who were collected around him. His subject was principally the Establishment of the university at the Federal City. He mentioned the offer he had made of giving to it all the interest he had in the City on condition that it should go on in a given time, and complained that though magnificent offers had been made by many speculators for the same purpose there seemed to be no inclination to carry them into Effect. He spoke as if

Sum will remain there *long* before the proper claimants are ascertained.

As Mr. Craik is young in business, you would do me a favor by accompanying him to the Bank (in Alexandria) for the purpose of arranging this matter properly, at that place; thereby placing me on secure ground. I have directed Mr. Craik to take a copy of the Decree; on the back of which it may be best, perhaps, to take the receipt from the Bank.

Not having the Will of Colo. Thos. Colville by me; not recollecting distinctly where the relations of his Mother were said to reside, and being unacquainted with characters in Alexandria who would have it most in their power to cause the notification required by the Decree, to be inserted in "some public paper in the Kingdom of Great Britain for two Months" thereby serving the parties, and fulfilling the intention of the Court; let me ask the favor of you to engage, if you can hit upon a suitable person for this purpose, the doing it. Mr. Hodgden some years ago, presented claims in behalf of *some* who conceived themselves *entitled* under the Will of Colo. Thos. Colville: and if in Alexandria, may be as eligible a character to apply to as any. With very great Esteem etc.[77]

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he felt a little hurt upon the subject. . . . as soon as my servant came up he went to him and asked 'if he had breakfasted.' He then shook me by the hand. . . . Washington has something uncommonly commanding and majestic in his walk, his address his figure and his countenance, His face is characterised by more intense and powerful thought than by quick and fiery conception. There is a mildness about its expression and an air of reserve in his manner covers its tone still more. He is about 64 but appears some years younger, and has sufficient apparent signs to his many years. He was sometimes entirely silent for many minutes, during which time an awkwardness seemed to prevail in every one present. His answers were sometimes short and approached to moroseness. He did not, at anytime, speak with any remarkable fluency. Perhaps the extreme correctness of his language which almost seemed studied produced this effect. He appeared to enjoy a humorous observation and made several himself. He laughed heartily some times and in a very good humored manner. On the morning of my departure he treated me as if I had lived years in his house with ease and attention. But in general I thought there was a slight air of moroseness about him as if something had vexed him." The original of this extract by J. H. B. Latrobe was made for President Hayes in November, 1878, and is now in the Hayes Memorial Library, Fremont, Ohio.

[77] In the writing of George Washington Craik.

*To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

(Private)

Mount Vernon, July 18, 1796.

Dear Sir: Let me request the favor of you to pay (out of the money I left in your hands) One hundred and thirty dollars to Mr. Thos: McEwen, agreeably to the direction contained in the enclosed letter from Colo. Wadsworth to me; and take his receipt for the same on the back of the letter.

Colo. Wadsworth was obliging enough to offer me a Naraganset of his own breeding, which he though would be fit for use in two or three years, this I accepted, provided I was not in the prosecution of a journey to the Land of Spirits (before that time) in which he might be of no service to me.

With very great esteem etc. [C.H.S.]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

(Private)

Mount Vernon, July 18, 1796.

Dear Sir: If there be any thing *yet to do,* which can be *done with propriety* towards fulfilling the several treaties which the Ud. States have entered into (without specially naming them) it is my desire, that there may be no delay in the execution: And if upon examining of them carefully, any matters should be found therein requiring the attention of either of the other departments, that these sentiments may be conveyed to the Secretaries thereof, as proceeding immediately from myself.

The new requisition of the Dey of Algiers, which has been yielded, will require to be laid before the Senate for its ratification; together with such papers as are necessary to explain and

account for the measure. It might be well therefore to revise and prepare them accordingly in time.

The continual attacks which have been made and are still making on the administration, in Bache's and other papers of that complexion, indecent as they are void of truth and fairness, under different signatures, and at present exhibited under that of Paulding, charging it with not only *unfriendly,* but even with *unjust* conduct towards France; and to prove it, resort to misrepresentation and mutilated authorities; and oftentimes to unfounded and round assertions; or to assertions founded on principles which apply to all the belligerent powers; but by them represented as aimed at France *alone.* Under these circumstances, it were to be wished that the enlightened public could have a clear and comprehensive view of facts. But how to give it lies the difficulty; and I see no method at present, however desirable the measure, that is not liable to objections; unless the predicted and threatened conduct of France towards this Country, (under pretext of our treaty with G: Britain) or its demands that the guarantee of their West India islands, agreeably to the treaty of Paris, should be fulfilled, presents the occasion.

Whether either of these will or will not happen; or whether any other mode may occur, which after mature consideration, shall appear expedient, or not, I wish that in your moments of leisure, if such you have, you would go most carefully and *critically* over the whole of the correspondence between the different secretaries of State and the French Minister in this Country, and with our own Minister at Paris, from the period matters began to change from their ancient habits and to assume their new form in that Country. If circumstances should render explanations of this sort expedient and necessary for Congress, a previous examination of the papers with notes and

remarks will be essential. If they should not, the measure nevertheless will be satisfactory and useful. I would have the *whole* of the transactions in all their direct and collateral relations, examined with as critical an eye as Mr. Bache or any of his numerous correspondents or communicants would do; that if there is any thing in them (not recollected by me) that can be tortured into an unfriendly disposition towards France, and not required by the neutral policy adopted by the Executive, approved by the people, and sanctioned by the Legislature; or which the peace, honor, and safety of this Country did not require, that I may be apprized of it, as my conviction of the contrary is strong.

I request also, that you will begin to note down all the subjects as they may occur, which may be proper to communicate to Congress at their next meeting; either at the opening of the session, or by separate messages in the course of it. Many things are forgotten, when the recollection of them is postponed, until the period at which they are wanted. Minute details will not be amiss, because a selection will at all times be easier to make than a collection.

Your Letter of the 8th instant did not reach my hands until the 13th nor did that of the 11th until the 15th. I mention these facts that you may know whether the delay has been occasioned by their not getting to the Post Office in time, or were detained at it. Other letters from Philada of the 8th and 11th came regularly to hand by the same mails on the 11th and 13th. I am etc.

P. S. I am frequently receiving letters from Phil: Wilson similar to the one I now enclose. Let me request therefore if his Case admits of redress, that an attempt may be made to procure it. If it does not, that he may be so informed, in explicit terms.[78]

[78] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

*To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Mount Vernon, July 18, 1796.

Sir: Your letters of the 10th, 12th and 13th. instant, with their enclosures, came all by the last Mail to Alexandria; and were received by me on Saturday morning. The contents of such parts as require it, shall be noticed.

The greatest, and what appears to me to be an insuperable difficulty in the way of running and marking the boundary line between the United States and the Cherokee tribe of Indians, the ensuing Autumn (which is certainly the most agreeable season for a work of this sort) is, that no Commissioners are, or can be appointed to superintend the same, in the recess of the Senate; which, unless extra causes should render it expedient, will not happen before the first Monday in December. This circumstance, in addition to the reasons assigned in your letters, renders a postponement of this measure until next year, unavoidable. But that it may not be delayed beyond a convenient time in the Spring, the Indians may be requested to come instructed to arrange matters for carrying the measure into effect *at that period*. *Their* interest, and the tranquillity of *our* frontier; requires that this line should not only be run (with as little loss of time as can possibly be avoided) but be very distinctly marked also; that ignorance may no longer be offered as a plea for transgressions on either side. and to ascertain in the interem, whether Genl. Pickens will serve as a Commissioner.

I hope, and expect that the proposed visit from the Cherokee Chiefs, will be managed so, as not to take place before the Month of Novemr. I have already, been incommoded, at this place, by a visit of several days, from a party of a dozen Cattawbas; and should wish while I am in this retreat, to avoid a

repetition of such guests. The reason why I name November, is, that between the middle and latter end of August, I shall repair to the Seat of government; remain there until between the middle and last of September; and then return to this place again for my family.

The extract which you enclosed in your letter of the 10th, from the Secretary of the Treasury, declaring his inability to furnish money for carrying on Commerce with the Indian Tribes, renders the appointment of Agents for that purpose, *at present,* altogether improper: and whether the Act "to regulate Trade and intercourse with the Indian Tribes, and to preserve Peace on the Frontiers" does, or does not go fully to the points which are enumerated in your letter of the 12th, there seems, under existing circumstances, no expedient so proper to execute the requisites of the above Act, and the duties enjoined on the late Superintendent of Indian affairs in the Southwestern Territory, which have become stagnant by the admission of it as a State into the Union,[79] as by applying the Services (under temporary regulations, and proper Instructions) of Colo. Henley or Mr. Dinsmore, or both, as the case shall, after duly considering it, appear to require. But if this expedient is resorted to, Mr. Dinsmore ought to return *immediately.*

My ideas with respect to the most eligable mode of procuring the 36 Gun Frigate, have, already (in a former letter) been conveyed to you; and your Instructions to Mr. Fox does, I perceive, accord therewith; but lest I may not perfectly understand another part of them, which relates to Timber and Plank, which certainly come under the description of "Perishable articles"; in the Act discontinuing three of the Frigates, and directing such of the Materials as are perishable to be sold;

[79] Tennessee, June 1, 1796.

I shall give it as my decisive opinion, that *all Wood,* not necessary for the retained Frigates; and the one wanted for Algiers; except the large pieces which have been obtained with difficulty and at a heavy expence, and which would not answer for ordinary Vessels and would sell for little; ought to be sold, agreeably to the directions of the aforesaid Act. If they are reserved; Secured from the weather; and persons employed to take care of them; the expence and imposition will exceed all calculation: and be wasted, or embezzled notwithstanding.[80]

*To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

(Private)

July 18, 1796.

Dear Sir: I have not segacity enough to discover what end was to be answered by reporting: first, that I was to be in Philadelphia on the 4th. July, and secondly, when that report was contradicted by my non-appearance, then to account for it by a fall from my Phæton.

If any scheme could have Originated, or been facilitated by these, or any other reports, however unfounded, I should not have been surprised at the propagation of them; for evidence enough has been given that truth or falsehood is equally used, and indifferent to that class of men if their object can be obtained. I wish you well, and am always your Affectionate.[80]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, July 20, 1796.

Sir: Your Letters of the 12 and 13 instant, with their enclosures, were received by monday's mail the 18th.

[80] From the *McHenry Photostats* in the Library of Congress.

The duplicate Commission for John Trumbull;[81] the blank Commissions for the Revenue officers; and the patents passed by the Attorney General, are all signed and returned under cover with this Letter.

The want of funds to carry on commerce with the Indian tribes, agreeably to a late act of Congress, is an unanswerable objection to the appointment of agents *at this time,* for that purpose: and in addition to the reasons you have assigned for not appointing a Superintendent of Indian affairs in place of Governor Blount; and for postponing running and marking the line between the United States and the Cherokee nation of Indians; the want of power in the President to appoint Commissioners to attend the survey, and a successor to the other, would I conceive, appear upon investigation; as the first would be an original appointment; and the latter did not take place in the recess of the Senate. It follows then of course, that these measures must stand suspended, and the best temporary uses made of the present situations and services of Colo. Henley and Mr. Dinsmoor,[82] that the nature of things will admit.

Not knowing myself, the purport of the German letter herewith enclosed; and having nobody about me that can translate it, I send it to you for this purpose, in order that I may know what attention to give it.[83]

To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

(Private)

Mount Vernon, July 22, 1796.

Dear Sir: Your private letter of the 16th. came to my hands at the same time that your official one of the 18th. did.

[81] United States agent for obtaining the release of impressed American seamen.
[82] David Henley and Silas Dinsmore.
[83] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

From what is there said, and appears by the enclosures, I am satisfied no unnecessary delay respecting the Algerine Frigate has taken place. From a former one, and perhaps from a solicitude to execute promptly whatever is entrusted to me, I had conceived otherwise.

As I have Mr. Lisbon here, and the house full of other company, I shall only add that I am what you will always find, your sincere frd. etc.[84]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, July 22, 1796.

Sir: Your Letter of 15 instant enclosing a copy of Mr. Adet's answer to your requisition of the 1st, and the circular of the Secy. of the Treasury to the Collectors, has been received; but did not get to my hands 'till the 20th.

There is a studied delay in the answer of the first, and a misteriousness in his conduct not easy to be accounted for. It did not, surely, if he had received no information from his government, and was ignorant of its intentions relatively to the points on which explanations were asked, require, (be the pressure of business what it might) fifteen days to make that declaration; nor will candour and good disposition justify the measure.

Not having papers here of [a public nature to resort to, I shall hope that the circular letter of the Secretary of the Treasury, to the Collectors; and all the Orders respecting French Prizes, have, in time and manner, been the result of necessity; and not the exercise of discretion; for the restriction *now,* after a contrary practice has been *allowed,* will be a source of much discontent; and of course calls for very correct proceedings in the execution of the Treaties, and Laws respecting the case.][85]

[84] From the *McHenry Photostats* in the Library of Congress.

[85] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.* The portion in brackets is in the writing of Washington, from a facsimile in an auction catalogue, 1934.

*To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Mount Vernon, July 22, 1796.

Sir: Your letter of the 18th. instant with its enclosures, came to hand by the last Mail. Such of the latter, as are original, I herewith return to your Office.

It would appear from the extract of Mr. Habersham's letter, that the Treaty (or rather meeting) between the Georgians and Creek Indians, has terminated unfavourably; and will tend, it is to be feared, to hostilities. A favorable result could not have been predicted from the Speech of the Georgia Commissioners, at their Commencement of the business with the Indian Chiefs; and it having ended without a Cession of Land, I shall be agreeably disappointed if there are not other means, soon used, to get possession of them.

By the letters from General Wilkinson and Captn. Bruff,[86] I expect the Western Posts will soon be in our possession; and I hope proper measures will be adopted to keep the Garrisons well suplied with Provisions and Military Stores.[87]

To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Mount Vernon, July 25, 1796.

Sir: The enclosed letter from Mr. Landais,[88] transmitting one from you to him, was received by the last Post.

Filling the vacancies in the Corps of Artillery, before the adjournment of the Senate, was suggested; but why, as it was not proposed by the military Act, that it should under go any diminution, it was not done, my memory does not serve me.

[86] Capt. James Bruff, of the United States Artillerists and Engineers.

[87] From the *McHenry Photostats* in the Library of Congress.

[88] Cadet Philip Landais. He was nominated for a lieutenancy in the Artillerists and Engineers, December 15.

If there are more Cadets in that Regiment than Mr. Landais; and there are not some distinguishing circumstances between his case and theirs, no discrimination, even if the authority in the recess of the Senate was competent, can be made in his favor, notwithstanding his desires, and the peculiarities which are detailed in his letter. I send it however, that you may consider the case and report thereon.[89]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

(Private)

Mount Vernon, July 25, 1796.

Dear Sir: Your private letters of the 19th. 19th. and 20th.[90] instant, have been duly received.

The request of Mr. J. Jones, to forward his letter to Colo. Monroe, is opposed to the speedy departure of Mr. D . . .[91] for France; and yet the gentleman who gave me the information spoke of it as a matter not doubtful; but added indeed (a circumstance I did not mention in my former letter) that it was on Mr. Swan[92] he leaned for money; and possibly, if that gentleman is at Boston, this may be the occasion of Mr. D——s journey to that place, under the pretext of contracting for arms.

Was Colo. Monroe requested to engage a Cannon-founder in behalf of the U States? If so, on what terms? To remove a person with his family will be attended with considerable expense; and unless with condition to *secure* his services, it will be done under great uncertainty. With respect to the Engineers, policy requires a further development of the unfavorable

[89] In the writing of George Washington Craik.

[90] Probably careless copying. There are now found in the *Washington Papers* only one private letter from Pickering dated July 19 and one dated July 21.

[91] John Dawson.

[92] John Swan.

disposition, with which we are threatened, before any encouragement ought to be given to the measure. But, even if *that* objection was fully removed, there are no funds, within my recollection, that would enable the Executive to incur the expense: therefore, as a law must precede, in this case, any Executive act, the answer to the query is quite easy and plain.

I am continuing and extending my enquiries for a fit character to fill the office of Surveyor General, without any great prospect of doing it to my satisfaction. Mr. Ludlow, besides what is mentioned in your letter (which requires attention) has not, according to my ideas of him, celebrity of character; and is of too short standing in the community to fill an office of so much importance from its trusts, and the ability and integrity which is required, tho' deficient in Compensation; unless by means which ought to be prevented.

It is much to be regreted that you did not discover the broken seal of Mr. Monroe's letter, to you, before the departure of the bearer of it; that an attempt at least might have been made to trace the channel through which it had passed; and thereby, if proofs could not have been obtained, to have found ground for just suspicion. You confine the post mark of Alexandria to his letter of the 8th. of April; had you included that also of the 2d. of May, I would have caused enquiry to have been made at that office with respect to the appearance of the letters when they went from thence.

I am glad to find that more smoke than fire is likely to result from the representation of French discontents, on account of our treaty with Great Britain. Had the case been otherwise, there would have been no difficulty in tracing the effect to the cause; and it is far from being impossible, that the whole may have originated in a contrivance of the opposers of the Government, to see what effect such threats would work; and finding

none that could answer their purpose, and no safe ground to stand on, if they pushed matters to extremity, the matter may terminate in gasconade. Be this as it may, the Executive have a plain road to pursue, namely, to fulfill all the engagements which his duty requires. Be influenced beyond this by none of the contending parties; maintain a strict neutrality, unless obliged by imperious circumstances to depart from it; do justice to all, and never forget that we are Americans; the remembrance of which will convince us, that we ought not to be French or English. With great esteem etc.[93]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, July 25, 1796.

Sir: Your Letters of the 18 and 19 inst: were received by Friday's post the 22d.

If the answer which you returned to the Minister of the French Republic to his enquiry relative to the prohibition of the sale of Prizes, brought by French armed vessels into the ports of the United States, should, as it ought, preclude any reply, it would be very agreeable: but it has not been found, that when the interest, or convenience of that nation is at stake, that the Minister thereof can be satisfied with reasons, however cogent, which are opposed to their views. But in this case, as in all others, the Executive must be governed by the Constitution and laws; and preserving good faith, and an unbiassed conduct, leave the rest to the good sense of our own citizens, and the justice of the nations with whom we have intercourse.

As it has been resolved for political considerations to put an American Citizen as Consul at Hamburg in place of Mr. Parrish,[94] it is fortunate that so eligible a character as Mr. Samuel

[93] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[94] John Parrish (Parish).

Williams of Salem presents itself, and I desire he may be commissioned accordingly, and advice thereof, as mere matter of information, given among other communications which may be made, to Mr. Monroe.[95]

*To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, July 27, 1796.

Sir: Your two letters, both bearing date the 21st. instant, with their enclosures, were received by the last Mail to Alexandria. It would have been unfortunate, and much indeed to have been regretted, if the French government had had as great cause of complaint against the conduct of the United States, as they have shewn a disposition to complain. It was natural to expect, tho' it was not easy to conceive on what ground, the French discontents, which had been so often announced, accompanied with such terrific threatenings, chiefly by anonymous writers, that the formal exhibition of them under the authority of the Directory, by their Minister of Foreign Affairs, would have had something serious, formidable, and embarrassing in their appearance; instead of which, most, if not all the charges seem to have originated either in a misinterpretation, or from want of attention, to Treaties and the Law of Nations; or to the want of a just, and timely representation of facts, with accompanying explanations; which our Minister near the French government had it in his power, and was directed to make.

Presuming that Mr. Polanen[96] is regularly accredited by the proper authority of the existing government of the United Netherlands, I see no cause, accordant with the principles which

[95] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[96] R. G. Van Polanen.

have actuated the government of the United States, why, when I return to Philadelphia, he should not be received as the Minister Resident of that Country. And if no objection (unknown to me) should occur to you, Mr. Polanen may be so informed. My arrival there will be by the first of September.

Instructions from the Treasury department to the Collectors, relative to the mode of obtaining Passports by American Seamen, will certainly be as effectual, and probably is as proper, as if they had issued from the Department of State; and this was my opinion to the Attorney-General: But he observed, first, that it was not in any respect connected with the Revenue of the Country. and 2dly. that there were some other Provisions in the Law (I do not now recollect of what nature) that required the Agency of the Department of State. I am satisfied, however, with the Circular which has been adopted; as the design will be equally well answered by it.

The original papers, forwarded with your last dispatches, are herewith returned.[97]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

(Private)

Mount Vernon, July 27, 1796.

Dear Sir: Your private letter of the 21st instant has been received.

Mr. Monroe in every letter he writes, relative to the discontents of the French government at the conduct of our own, always concludes without finishing his story; leaving great scope to the imagination to divine what the ulterior measures of it will be.

[97] From a photostat of the original kindly furnished by Robert Friedenberg, of New York City.

There are some things in his correspondence and your letters, which I am unable to reconcile. In one of your last to me, you acknowledge the receipt of one from him of the 8th. of April, which I have not seen; and in his letter of the 2d. of May, he refers to the one of the 25th. of March as the last he had written. This letter of the 25th. of March, if I recollect dates rightly, was received before I left Philadelphia; and related his *demand* of an audience of the French Directory, and his having had it; but that the conference which was promised him with the Minister of foreign affairs, had not taken place, nor had he heard anything from him, altho' the catalogue of complaints exhibited by that minister, is dated the 9th. of March, and his reply thereto the 15th. of the same month. If these recitals are founded in fact, they form an enigma which requires explanation.

Has the letter said to be dispatched by Doctr. Brokenbrough, got to your hands? I hope it will, if it has not done so already.

Mr. De la Croix[98] alludes, I perceive, in the close of his third and last head of complaints, to our guarantee of their West-India Islands; but whether to bring the subject to recollection *only,* or to touch upon it more largely thereafter, is problematical. I am etc.[99]

To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Mount Vernon, July 29, 1796.

Sir: Your letter of the 25th instant, enclosing the Treaty with the Creek Indians, and other Papers relative thereto, has been received.

The Papers are returned, and due consideration, it is expected, will be given them; and a report thereof made.

[98] French Minister of Foreign Affairs.

[99] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

Four months (the time allowed by the above Treaty; for running the boundary line between that Nation and the United States) seems, under any circumstances, to be hardly sufficient to arrange matters for such a Work; but if it is to be done under the Authority of the Treaty newly entered into, and the Senate are to have an Agency in the appointment of the Surveyor &ca. The Commissioners (on the part of the United States) have agreed to the measure, the execution of which is impracticable; as there is an interval of more than five Months between the date of the Treaty and meeting of the Senate; consequently, no ratification of it in that period; nor appointments, if the advice and consent of the Senate to them, be necessary, can be obtained without convening that body.

Conformably to the Treaty of New York, with the Creeks, a Mr. Ellicot [1] was empowered to run the line; but whether any person on behalf of the United States was commissioned to see it done, or whether the appointment of Mr. Ellicott was made with, or without the participation of the Senate, my memory does not enable me to pronounce. Be this however as it may, the Constitution and Laws must govern in this case.[2]

*To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

Mount Vernon, July 29, 1796.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 23d. instant came to me by the last Post; and the letter therein alluded to, dated the 11th, was received in due course. The receipt of which I as certainly acknowledged, whatever may have become of it; but having kept no copy thereof, I am unable to repeat the contents. Sure I am, because I remember well, that an acknowledgment was given by the Post after it was received.[3]

[1] Andrew Ellicott.
[2] In the writing of George Washington Craik.
[3] Probably Washington's letter to the Secretary of the Treasury, July 13, 1796, *q. v.*

I am glad the freight of my Wine to, and from India has been paid to Captn. Tingey;[4] and whenever the duties are demanded I pray they may be paid also, if you have means of mine in your hands sufficient thereto. I am always etc. [C.H.S.]

*To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

(Private)

Mount Vernon, August 1, 1796.

Dear Sir: Mr. Dandridge having rejoined my family again, preceeds me to Philadelphia, in order to bring up, and facilitate my Recording.

He will ease you of the trouble of Supplying Mr. Kitts weekly calls, by placing the money you have receivd on my private account, in his hands, and furnishing him with more, if necessary, on account of my compensation as formerly. With very great esteem etc. [C.H.S.]

To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Mount Vernon, August 1, 1796.

Sir: The Post of Friday last brought me your dispatches of the 26th Ulto, with the Papers therein enclosed.

The draught of a letter to the Agent of the Department of War, and the Instructions for the person proposed as Deputy paymaster and Storekeeper in the State of Tennessee, are guarded and proper. The only doubt remaining with me, is, whether so many Officers, in that quarter, are really necessary; and whether some of them may not, in the public estimation, be considered (after the Indian Agent for that Department is appointed) in the light of sinecures. If, however, upon a thorough

[4] Thomas Tingey.

investigation of the duties of their several Offices, it shall be found that the service would be too hard upon a less number, or that they are necessary as checks, I consent to the appointment of Mr. Hilles as Deputy Paymaster and Storekeeper; provided his conduct in the Accomptants Office has afforded sufficient evidence of its fitness to discharge the duties required by your Instructions; to do which, properly, he ought to be a person of some experience in business; to be able to execute it with judgment; to possess firmness; and great integrity.

What will be the occupations of Mr. Dinsmore? and what is become of a Mr. Shaw (that was, if I recollect rightly, the name of a person) who was sent some time ago by Genl. Knox (while Secretary of War) into that quarter? There certainly can be no occasion for continuing the latter, if the former is retained.

A Troop of Horse, in my opinion, may, for the reasons you have assigned, be necessary on the frontiers of Georgia; and I desire they may join Conolel [*sic*] Gaither[5] accordingly.

I have no objection to the releasment of Lieutt. Geddis[6] from his present arrest, at the request of those Officers who have asked it; But as the Attorney General will be at Philadelphia, I would have his opinion taken on the *power* of granting a pardon for the Offence of which he has been found guilty, and Cashired; and the mode by which it may, with propriety be accomplished: for it may be questioned, whether a remital of the Sentence of the Court, ought not to be preceeded by an Act of approval, or rejection, as the foundation. At any rate some attention to the form (which I request may be given) will be necessary.

I am glad to find by Mr. Byers letter to Colo. Henley, that Spiritous liquor is not necessary to carry on trade with the

[5] Lieut. Col. Commandant Henry Gaither, of the Third Sub-Legion, United States Army.

[6] Lieut. Simon Geddes (Geddis), of the Artillerists and Engineers.

Indians. I have always been of opinion that it was productive of more discontent and mischief than good, and therefore hope it will cease to be an article of Traffic on public Account.[7]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, August 1, 1796.

Sir: Your letters of the 26 and 27. ulto. were received by the Post on friday last. Forwarding without further direction the Commission appointing Mr. Davis[8] Attorney for the District of Massachusetts in place of Mr. Otis[9] after satisfactorily ascertaining those points, which had occasioned the hesitation, was perfectly conformable to my intentions.

I rejoice to find by the account you have given of the contents of the dispatches from Colo. Humphreys, that there is a probability of the speedy release of our captives in Algiers; that the Dey had recovered his temper, and that Mr. Barlow[10] had been received as our Consul at that place. The suggestions of that gentlemen, relative to the policy and ultility of forming commercial and friendly relations with the Italian States, with Austria and with the Grand Seignior, deserve serious attention; and I not only request you to bestow it, but to ascertain in the best manner you can, against my arrival in Philadelphia, the principles on which such connexions could be advantageously formed. Good measures should always be executed as soon as they are conceived and circumstances will permit.

It has ever been my opinion from the little I have seen, and from what I have heard of Mr. Barlow, that his abilities are adequate to any employment; and, improved as they must have

[7] In the writing of George Washington Craik.
[8] John Davis.
[9] Harrison Gray Otis.
[10] Joel Barlow.

been by travel and the political career he has run, there can be little doubt of his fitness as a negotiator for some of the Countries above mentioned, with proper instructions.[11]

To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

(Private)

Mount Vernon, August 1, 1796.

Dear Sir: This letter will be presented to you by Mr. Dandridge, who has rejoined my family and proceeds to Philadelphia in order to facilitate the recording of my loose files.

As he left my family a little suddenly, I thought it necessary to mention this matter to you, lest *that* circumstance should be ascribed to unworthy motives; none of which I have to charge him with, as I always had, and still have, a high opinion of his honor and integrity. I am, etc.[12]

*To WILHELM LOUIS WERNECKE

Mount Vernon, August 3, 1796.

Sir: I am directed by the President of the United States to acknowledge the receipt of your letter to him, dated the 24th. of July. To express his concern that your prospect of recovering the Estate, which you are in pursuit of,[13] is so unpromising; and to add, that Mr. Erdman who Interpreted between you, either greatly misunderstood *him,* or *you* have greatly misunderstood Mr. Erdman; for that so far from promising to have any Agency in the business, he requested that Gentleman to inform you, in

[11] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

[12] From the *McHenry Photostats* in the Library of Congress.

[13] In Bartholomew Dandridge's letter of Aug. 10, 1796, to Washington, he notes that Wernecke had gone to Virginia "to look after the Estate which he has been in pursuit of. I retain the letter for him therefore, supposing it of no consequence that he should have it." Dandridge's letter is in the *Washington Papers.*

explicit terms, that he could not meddle in the affair at all. That the Courts of Justice (over whom he had no controul) were alone competent to decide on the justice and equity of your claim, and that it was to one of these if the person in possession would not surrender the Estate you would be obliged to resort for the purpose of establishing your title, if good. This he directs me to repeat to you again; and to assure you that it is Law alone not men that governs in this Country.

His advice to you however, is, to lay all your title papers before some eminent Lawyer in Richmond, (of whom there are many), and as you are not in Cash to fee him well (which in this, as in most other Countries is essential) to inform the Gentlemen you employ (if he thinks your title good, and worth prosecuting) that he shall receive a certain sum, or a certain proportion of whatsoever he shall recover if he succeeds; but that you are unable to pay any thing if he does not.

This, at the sametime that it will involve you in no expence, will be a stimulus to his exertions; and seems to be the best, indeed the only mode (in your circumstances), by which the business can be prosecuted. I am etc.[14]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, August 3, 1796.

Sir: Herewith you will receive my signature to the Commission appointing Samuel Williams, of Massachusetts, Consul for the U. States at the port of Hamburg &c. transmitted to me in your letter of the 29th ultimo.

If Mr. La Motte possesses much experimental, as well as theoretical knowledge in the casting of Cannon &c. there can be no

[14] The letter sent was, presumably, in the writing of and signed by George Washington Craik.

doubt of the utility of his services; and coming with his family will be an evidence of his intention to remain; but the latter ought not to be accomplished at the expense of the United States, unless his services are secured. But Mr. Monroe it is to be presumed will take care that one does not happen without the other.[15]

To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Mount Vernon, August 3, 1796.

Sir: In reply to your statement of the case of the Cadets, in the Corps of Artillerists and Engineers; I give it as my opinion that no promotion of them should take place at present, under the circumstanes you have related.

When I return to Philadelphia, it will be expected that you will bring forward the general plan for new modeling the Army agreeably to the late Act of Congress, at which time it may be expedient to take into consideration the case of Landais, and other Cadets in the above Corps.[16]

To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

(Private)

Mount Vernon, August 5, 1796.

Dear Sir: Your private letters of the 29th and 30th ulto. have been received.

If Mr. Churchman's[17] account of the broken seal of Mr. Monroe's letter to the Department of State, be true, it bespeaks the man of candour and does him credit; but I do not see why, when called upon, he should require time to consider whether

[15] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[16] In the writing of George Washington Craik.
[17] John Churchman.

he should relate the truth, "or give a certificate, that might excite suspicions of innocent people"; the impropriety of the latter would strike a man of honor the moment the thought arose.

He has written to me the enclosed letter (which may be returned): but I know too little of his *real* character; the respectability of his family and connexions; or his former pursuits, to form any opinion of his fitness to fill an office of such importance and respectability, to public acceptance. As a mathematician I should suppose him competent; but there are other qualifications equally necessary in a Surveyor General. I wish you would make all the enquiries respecting these matters, your opportunities will permit. And if Mr. Hawkins[18] should be in Philadelphia, as he wrote the Secretary of War he should be, let me desire also, that you would indirectly and without any commitment ascertain, 1st whether he possesses such mathematical knowledge as would qualify him for the above office; and in that case, 2dly find out whether he would accept it. I have not yet, been able to hear of a character that combines the requisite qualifications for this trust; nor is it likely I shall do so before my return to Philadelphia. I am etc.[19]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, August 5, 1796.

Sir: With much pleasure did I receive the information, contained in your letter of the 30 ultimo, of the ratification of the Treaty with Spain, by the Government of that Country. The unwelcome news of the plague being at Algiers is an alloy thereto; but we must trust that Providence will prevent our unhappy fellow citizens at that place from suffering by that malady.

[18] Benjamin Hawkins.

[19] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

Much is to be regretted that so many untoward accidents should have prevented the redemption money[20] from getting to that regency before this event took place, but as there has been no want of exertion in the Government to accomplish this, no *blame* attaches itself, whatever may happen.[21]

To BARTHOLOMEW DANDRIDGE

August 5, 1796.

Dear Sir: The enclosed letter from a Mrs. A. L. Dubarry (whom I never saw in my life) and one from Major George Lewis, will shew you what is to be done with the hundred Dollar note enclosed in the letter of the latter.

By the continuance of the mail that brought Major Lewis's letter to me, I inform'd the above named Mrs. Dubarry that I had wrote to Howell Lewis as soon as I got to Mount Vernon, but had heard nothing from him; that I should return his note to her. when I got back to Philadelphia; and that she should have recourse to a court of Justice; as I c'd have no further agency in the business.

I request that you would immediately find her out (by the direction in her own letter); Shew her Major Lewis letter; and take her receipt for the money you pay. Howell Lewis's note was given to a Mr. Chodkewiez the former husband of Mrs. Dubarry; it may be proper therefore, that some enquiry be made after her present one, at time you pay the money; that caution may be observed. But as she appears to be in distress, by her manner of writing, let there be no delay in the payment. The note of hand for this money is dated 21st of March 1793 and ought, in my opinion, to have been discharged with interest; and so I shall write to Major Lewis.

[20] For ransoming captured American seamen.
[21] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Enclosed also, you will find another letter to me from one Wilhelm Louis Wernecke, with the answer (open) wch. Mr. Craik by my direction has given. Seal and contrive it to him, if you can find where he lives. I am etc.[22]

To DUC DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD-LIANCOURT

Mount Vernon, August 8, 1796.

Sir: The Letter which you did me the honor of writing to me the 25th. of last month, came duly to hand; and the enclosure for Mr. George Fayette[23] was immediately presented to him.

The name and character of the duke de Liancourt were not unknown to me before his arrival in this Country; and the respect which I entertained for the latter (although political considerations have deprived me of the honor of a personal acquaintance with him) was, and is as great as he or his warmest friends could desire.

M. de Liancourt must be too well acquainted with the history of governments; with the insidious ways of the world; and with the suspicions and jealousies of its rulers; not to acknowledge that men in responsible situations cannot, like those in private life, be governed *solely* by the dictates of their own inclinations, or by such motives as can only affect themselves.

To dilate upon this observation, or to attempt to point at the distinction between the conduct of a man in public office who is accountable for the consequences of his measures to others; and one in private life, who has no other check than the rectitude of his own actions, would be superfluous to a man of information: but if exemplification of these facts was necessary, it might be added with truth, that in spite of all the circumspection

[22] From a copy in the Toner Transcripts in the Library of Congress.
[23] George Washington Motier Lafayette.

with which my conduct has been marked towards the gentlemen of your nation, who have left France under circumstances which have rendered them obnoxious to the governing power of it, the countenance said to be given to them, is alleged as a cause of discontent in the Directory of France against the government of the U States. But it is not my intention to dwell on this subject: how far the charge is merited, no one better than yourself can judge; and your candour and penetration will, I am persuaded, appreciate my motives for the reverse of the charge, however contrary the operation of them may have been to your expectation or to my wishes.

With respect to Mr. La Fayette I may, without troubling you with the details, venture to affirm that whatever private friendship could require, or public duty would allow, has been, and will continue to be essayed by me to effect his liberation. the difficulty in accomplishing of which has, no doubt, proceeded in a great measure from the cause you have mentioned, and will probably exist while the war between the belligerent powers continues to rage.

No man regrets this, and the present unhappy situation of this amiable family more than I do; but it is an ascertained fact, that altho' Fayette is an *adopted* citizen of this Country, the Government of it, nor the people themselves, notwithstanding their attachment to his person and the recollection of his services, have any right to demand him as *their* Citizen by the law of nations: consequently, an expression of their earnest wishes, that liberty may be restored to him, is all they can do towards accomplishing it. to attempt more, would avail *him* nothing, and might involve the *U States* in difficulties of great magnitude.

This letter, Sir, you will consider as a private one; originating from yours to me, relatively to Mr. La Fayette. In replying

to the sentiments contained in it, I could not, from respect to your character, and the indulgence of my own feelings, miss the occasion of giving you this explanation of matters, which otherwise might have the appearance of mystery. It affords an occasion also of assuring you, that, with sentiments of the highest esteem, &c.[24]

To THE POSTMASTER GENERAL[25]

Mount Vernon, August 8, 1796.

Sir: You were obliging enough a few Posts ago, to send young Mr. Lafayette a dead letter, which had been deposited in your Office (from his friends in Europe).

As his anxiety to hear from, or of his Parents, can only be exceeded by his uneasiness at their unhappy situation; I pray you to direct the deputy Post masters in the Sea-Port Towns, if any letters with his Superscription thereon, or that of Mr. Frestal (to whose care he is committed) should get to their Offices, to put them under a cover to me.

This would avoid delay; insure their safe delivery; and might be a source of consolation to the young Gentleman. With Esteem, etc.[26]

To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Mount Vernon, August 8, 1796.

Sir: Your letter of the 3d. instant, with the information of our possession of Fort Ontario (lately occupied by the Troops of Great Britain) and the correspondence between Captn. Bruff of the United States Troops, and Captn. Clarke of the British, was brought to me by the last Post.

[24] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[25] Joseph Habersham.
[26] In the writing of George Washington Craik.

Several matters are submitted by the former for consideration; among them, the mode of supplying the Garrison with fire Wood, and furnishing it with a Sein. With respect to the first of these, providing it with a Horse, or pair of Horses, and a Batteau (as the fuel is to be transported so far) seems to be a matter of necessity; but the practice of the American Army should be consulted for precedents, before the British allowance or indeed any allowance, is made to the Soldiers for cutting and transporting of it to the Fort, when the means by which it is done, are furnished by the public. If no allowance of this sort has been made heretofore, except in Towns where the Wood was to be bought, which, if I remember rightly, was the case invariably while I commanded the Army; it would be a dangerous innovation to begin it now; for it would instantly pervade *all the Garrisons,* and the whole Army; be their situation what it may. In time of peace, where no danger is to be apprehended, and where the duty is light, I see no hardship in the Soldiers providing fuel for their *own* use, and comfort. With regard to a Sein, as the expence will be small, (if it is taken care of) and the convenience great, I think the Garrison should be indulged with one.

There is another part of Captn. Bruffs letter which I do not perfectly understand, where he says, "he is at a loss what orders to give Lieutt. Rowen[27] respecting the continuance of his command, &ca. &ca. or whether to join me, or stay, on the arrival of a reinforcement, or detachment." Doubts of this sort should be removed as soon as possible.

There is a suggestion in Mr. Glens letter of the 17th. of July which merits consideration. I mean the purchase of a Vessel (now in use) on Lake Ontario. The Utility of this measure depends very much, if not altogether, upon the cheapest and

[27] Lieut. Robert Rowan (Rowen), of the Artillerists and Engineers.

best channel through which to supply the Garrison at Niagara, with Provisions and Stores. If by the rout of the Mohawk and Oswego, a *proper* Vessel on Lake Ontario would certainly be useful; If by the way of Presque-Isle and Lake Erie, it would be unnecessary; and if by a middle communication suggested (I think by Mr. Weston) to the Canal Company in the State of New York, in some report which has been published, it would depend much upon the place of its entrance into the above-mentioned lake for its utility.[28]

*To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

(Private)

Mount Vernon, August 8, 1796.

Dear Sir: Your private letter of the 3d. instant, accompanying the Official one of the same date, came to hand by the last Post. The draught of the letter to the Governor of Georgia is approved. I have added a word or two to the last paragraph but one, by way of *hint,* where we shall look for the cause, if Peace is not preserved on the frontier of that State.[29]

I request that you would *begin* to note the occurrences that have happened in the War Department (since the Adjournment of Congress) which will require to be communicated to that body in the Speech, or by messages, at the next Session. It is from the materials furnished by each Department, and the Memorandums taken by myself, that the first is framed; and it will be an omission, not to commit these to writing in the moment they occur; it being much easier to select, than to collect matter, for these purposes, when the hour arrives for digesting them into form. If other things (although they may

[28] In the writing of George Washington Craik.

[29] See Washington's letter to the Secretary of War, July 22, 1796, *ante.*

be extraneous to your department) should occur, let them be noted also. It is better to have them *in all* than to *escape all* the Memorandums I shall be furnished with. I am etc.[30]

To HENRY GLEN[31]

Mount Vernon, August 8, 1796.

Sir: As it appears by the Secretary of Wars letter to me, that you have lately been to the Forts of Osnego[32] and Niagara and must have a competent knowledge of the time and manner of making a tour to the latter, I request the favor of you, as well for my own satisfaction, as to enable me to answer the enquiries of others, to solve the following questions in detail, viz:

How long would it take a *small* party, unincumbered with heavy baggage; who should not, on the journey waste time unnecessarily, nor proceed so as to fatiegue themselves, to perform this Tour from the *City* of New York?

To explain what I mean, by desiring that the above question may be answered in detail, permit me to propound the following queries:

1st. What is the usual time in going from New York to Albany by Water conveyance? the same by land?

2d. Is a passage in the Packets, or Stages, always to be had from N. York?

3d. What time does it require to go from Albany to Fort Schuyler (or Stanwix) by Water? the same by land?

4th. Could a light Boat, or two, according to circumstances, with Batteau men *always* be had at Schenectady? On what terms?

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[30] From the *McHenry Photostats* in the Library of Congress.
[31] Of Schenectady, N. Y.
[32] Oswego.

5th. If Boats are not to be had, could Horses be hired at Schenectady to go to Fort Schuyler?

6th. How long in getting from Fort Schuyler to Fort Osnego? Would there be any certain dependence of procuring Craft at the former, to descend by the Wood Creek, &ca. &ca. to the latter? And whether with the assistance of a Cloak, and a little roughing, one could pass through that Country without carrying tents or bedding? and would moreover be supplied with Provisions, if not taken along?

7th. What is the usual passage from Osnego to Niagara? Could there be any dependance on a Vessel at the former (as we have none of our own) without risking an uncertain, perhaps tedious delay? And is there any way, in case this should be likely to happen, of going by land? What is the distance, and are there any settlements, and a Road between those places?

Answers as full and precise, as the nature of the case, and your knowledge of circumstances will enable you to give, would go near to ascertain the time required to preform this rout in; and the provision, necessary to be made for it. After requesting these, as soon as you can conveniently give them, and apologizing for the trouble you will have in complying with this request, I have only to add that with very great esteem, I am etc.

PS. Would such Batteaux as could be obtained at Schenectady be fit to perform the *whole* voyage to Niagara? And in that case could they be engaged for it with *proper* hands?[33]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, August 8, 1796.

Sir: Your letter of the 3d. inst: accompanying the ratified copy of the Spanish treaty, by his Catholic Majesty, came to my

[33] In the writing of George Washington Craik. The P. S. is in the writing of Washington.

hands by the last post. The Proclamation annexed thereto has received my signature,[34] and is herewith returned.[35]

*To JOHN LATHROP, JUNIOR

Mount Vernon, August 8, 1796.

Sir: I have received, and pray you to accept my thanks, for your Oration delivered the 4th. of July, which you were obliging as to send to Sir Your etc.[36]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

(Private)

Mount Vernon, August 10, 1796.

Sir: I have received, and pray you to accept my thanks, for Pinckney. It becomes necessary *now* to prepare instructions for him without delay: to bring him fully and perfectly acquainted with the conduct and policy of this Government towards France &c. and the motives which have induced the recal of Mr. Monroe.

As the measure, when known, will excite much speculation, and set all the envenomed pens to work; it is worthy of consideration what part, and how much of the causes which have produced this event, should be spoken of *unofficially* by the officers of Government.

It will be candid, proper and necessary to apprize Mr. Monroe (as the measure and his successor are decided on) of his recal; and in proper terms, of the motives which have impelled it.

In the course of next week (probably about the middle of it) I

[34] The proclamation is the usual form which recites the full text of the treaty. It is dated Aug. 2, 1796, although, from this letter, it was not signed by the President until August 8. No copy is now found in the *Washington Papers*.

[35] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[36] From a photostat of the original kindly furnished by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Lathrop's letter of July 16, 1796, is in the *Washington Papers*.

expect to commence my journey for Philada; but as I shall be obliged to halt a day at the fedl. City, and from the heat of the season and other circumstances must travel slow, it is not likely I shall arrive there before the middle of the following week.[37]

To JOHN MARSHALL

Mount Vernon, August 10, 1796.

Dear Sir: If you can recollect by whom, or in what manner the letter for General Pinckney, which went under cover to you, was sent to the Post office in Richmond, I would thank you for information respecting it.

That Letter, with a note inclosed therein, containing three Bank Bills for one hundred Dollars each, for the sufferers by fire in Charleston, had not on the 26th. of July been received by that Gentleman; although duplicates written *after* I had been favored with your answer has been acknowledged by him.

In confidence, I inform you that Genl. Pinckney accepts the appointment to France, and will soon be in Philada. to prepare for the Mission. With very great esteem etc.[37]

*To CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY

Mount Vernon, August 10, 1796.

My dear Sir: With sincere pleasure I acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th Ulto; learning by it that you may be so soon expected with your lady in Phila. to proceed on the Mission to Fre.

If this letter should find you in Charleston, it is intended to express A regret that my original letters had not been received by you; and to ask, if there has been any miscarriage of a Mail

[37] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

in the Southern quarter; aiming thereby to come at some clue to the discovery of this accident. The sum sent was three hundred dollars in 3 Bank notes of Columbia.

My best respects attend Mrs. Pinckney, and with Affecte. regard etc.

*To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

(Private)

Mount Vernon, August 10, 1796.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 3d. Instant did not get to my hands until the 8th. I most assuredly wrote the letter mentioned in my last; but I find it is no uncommon thing for my letters to miscarry. The originals to Genl. Pickney [*sic*] of the —— Ulto. (one of which containing 300 dollrs. in Bank notes for the sufferers by fire in Charleston) had not been received by that Gentleman on the 26th. of that Month, altho' duplicates dispatched eight days afterwards, had. I have heard of no miscarriage of a Mail, and I have evidence that the above letters (under one cover) proceeded *safely,* as far as Richmond.

General Pinckney accepts the appointment to France, and will, very shortly, with his lady, be in Philadelphia to embark. As this circumstance will furnish a new Subject for envenomed Pens, it merits consideration how far the causes which have occasioned it, should, *unofficially,* be spoken of by the Officers of the Government.

Let me desire that you would *begin* to note such occurrences (not only those in your own Department, but all others which may occasionally present themselves) as may be fit and proper to communicate to Congress at their next Session. It is from these materials, and such Memorandums as I take myself, my speech is composed. It is better to note down *every* thing which

may be requisite on this occasion, than to omit *any* thing; because it is easier to select, than to collect matter, at the moment I am going to compose it.

I am sorry the Treasury is unable to answer all the appropriated calls upon it. My present intention is to leave this for Philadelphia in the course of next Week, but as I shall travel slow, and have to halt a day or two on the Road, my arrival there is a little uncertain. With very great esteem etc. [C. H. S.]

To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

(Private)

Mount Vernon, August 10, 1796.

Dear Sir: Colo. Hawkins is now here, on his way to Philadelphia, and proposes to proceed in the Stage of to morrow.

He has related many matters, and read many papers relative to the Treaty with the Creek Indians; the conduct of the State Commissioners of Georgia; &ca. &ca. But, as this is not the regular way of bringing business of this sort before me, I have requested that he and Mr. Clymer (who he supposes will be in Philadelphia before him) will report to you, not only what appertains to the Commission, but their observations and remarks *generally* as may be interesting for the government to be informed of, for the regulation of its conduct in that quarter. I wish you, therefore to be minute in your enquiries and entries.

My present intention, is to leave this about the middle of next Week for Philadelphia, but as I shall spend a day in the Federal City, and on account of the weather, propose to travel slow, it will, probably, be the middle of the Week after before I shall arrive there. With very great esteem etc.[38]

[38] In the writing of George Washington Craik. The letter sent is an A. L. S. and is said to be in the Buffalo Historical Society.

*To ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Mount Vernon, August 10, 1796.

My dear Sir: The principal design of this letter, is to inform you, that your favor of the 30th Ulto,[39] with its enclosure,[40] got safe to my hands by the last Post; and that the latter shall have the most attentive consideration I am able to give it.

A cursory reading it has had, and the Sentiments therein contained are extremely just, and such as ought to be inculcated. The doubt that occurs at first view, is the length of it for a News Paper publication; and how far the occasion would countenance its appearing in any other form, without dilating *more* on the present state of matters, is questionable. All the columns of a large Gazette would scarcely, I conceive, contain the present draught. But having made no accurate calculation of this matter, I may be much mistaken.

If any matters should occur to you as fit subjects of communication at the opening of the next Session of Congress I would thank you for noting and furnishing me with them. It is my

[39] Hamilton's letter, which inclosed this draft, is in the New York Public Library. From the printed text in Paltsits's *Washington's Farewell Address*, the following extract is quoted: "It has been my object to render this act *importantly* and *lastingly* useful, and avoiding all just cause of present exception, to embrace such reflections and sentiments as will wear well, progress in approbation with time, and redound to future reputation. How far I have succeeded, you will judge. I have begun the second part of the task; the digesting the supplementary remarks to the first address, which in a fortnight I hope also to send you; yet I confess the more I have considered the matter the less eligible this plan has appeared to me. There seems to me to be a certain awkwardness in the thing, and it seems to imply that there is a doubt whether the assurance without the evidence would be believed. Besides that I think that there are some ideas which will not wear well in the former address, and I do not see how any part can be omitted, if it is to be given as the thing formerly prepared. Neverthe-[le]ss when you have both before you you can better judge. If you should incline to take the draft now sent, and after perusing and noting any thing that you wish changed and will send it to me I will with pleasure shape it as you desire. This may also put it in my power to improve the expression and perhaps in some instances condense."

[40] Hamilton's "Original Major Draft" for the Farewell Address, which is in the *Hamilton Papers* in the Library of Congress. It is printed (with all the alterations in the manuscript reproduced in type) in Paltsits's *Washington's Farewell Address* (New York Public Library: 1935), p. 179, *et seq.*

wish, and my custom to provide all the materials for the Speech in time that it may be formed at leizure. With sincere esteem and Affectionate regard I am etc.

To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Mount Vernon, August 12, 1796.

Sir: The originals and drafts of letters, enclosed in yours of the 8th. instt, are herewith returned.

The publication of the letters to and from Lieutt. Colo. England was certainly improper; and the reprehension of Genl. Wilkinson for *doing it,* or suffering it *to be done,* is just; and the manner in which it has been conveyed to him is delicate.

The draught of the letter to Colo. Gaither, predicated on the information you *had* received, is very proper; But as Colo. Hawkins is on his way to Philadelphia, and Mr. Clymer[41] probably arrived there, I would not have it dispatched until you communicate fully and freely with them on all matters and things relative to that frontier; the establishment of Posts, &ca. &ca. Many things in oral conversations often cast up that never can be well explained, and understood by written transmissions from so distant a part of the Union. It is better to encounter a little delay in acquiring perfect information, (as much so I mean, as the nature of the case will admit) than to have a second letter to write on the same subject; corrective perhaps, in some instances, of the first. This appears the more necessary in the present case, for as much as Colo. Hawkins is furnished with suggestions from the Indians themselves, relative to proper sites for the establishment of Military and trading Posts.

General Picken's[42] sentimts. respecting the conduct of the Indian Agent to the Southward, accords precisely with the ideas

[41] George Clymer.
[42] Andrew Pickens.

I have entertained of that person, sometime past. It is necessary therefore that every information, derivable from the Commissioners, and other sources should be obtained that the government may take its measures accordingly.

As I expect to be in Philadelphia about the 22d. instant, I shall not enlarge on these, or touch any other subject, except informing you that the Pardon for Lieutt. Geddis[43] is returned with my signature.[44]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, August 16, 1796.

Dear Sir: As I propose to commence my Journey to Philadelphia tomorrow, the intention of this letter is only to acknowledge the Receipt of yours of the 12th. instant, enclosing a translation of that from the Dey of Algiers to the President of the United States. Although I begin my Journey to morrow, I am unable to say when I shall conclude it. So constant, and excessive have the Rains been in this quarter, that, according to my information, the Roads in many places are almost impassable; but patience and perseverance will, I expect take me to Philadelphia by Monday or Tuesday next. I am, etc.[45]

*To JAMES ANDERSON

City of Washington, August 18, 1796.

Mr. Anderson: In passing through Alexandria yesterday, on my way to Philadelphia,[46] I saw Colo. Fitzgerald, who informed

[43] The original of the pardon of Lieut. Simon Geddes (Geddis) is in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. A copy is in the Toner Transcripts in the Library of Congress.

[44] In the writing of George Washington Craik.

[45] From the printed text in an auction catalogue, 1912.

[46] Washington left Mount Vernon, August 17, and arrived in Philadelphia the evening of August 21.

me of a letter he had received from you in consequence of one which Doctr. Stuart had written to his relation, Mr. Fitzhugh of Stafford. It might have promoted both our views, if you had come immediately to my house upon the receipt of that letter, as more satisfaction would have resulted from the conversation of an hour or two, than from all the letters that can be written on the subject.

As this however was not the case, and as I shall not be at Mount Vernon again until the latter end of next month, and consequently cannot see you sooner; I will be candid, and explicit in what I am going to say to you; from whence, and your answer, some opinion may be formed of the probability of our mutual expectations being answered.

Mr. Pearce who at present looks after my business is a person with whose management I am very well pleased. He is a man of property; of great integrity; very great industry; and much experience in the superintendence of a large concern; having been the manager for a Gentn on the E.s[47] fifteen or 18 years, before he came to me.

In consideration of these qualifications, and on acct. of my being absent from home, when a confidential character was peculiarly necessary for my concerns I agreed to give him as an inducement to remove from the Eastern shore and on acct. of his established character as an expd. Manager. One hundred Guineas a year, although a hundred pounds (Virga. money curry) was the most I had ever given before. He superintends *all* my concerns, which appertain to the Estate of Mount Vernon; consisting besides Tradesmen of four large Farms, and the Mansion house farm, the last of which (though not much is raised at it) is not the least troublesome part of his duty in my [indeciperable]

[47] Eastern Shore.

At and over each of these seperate farms and workmen there is as good an Overseer as has been in the power of the Superintended [*sic*] to procure, to reside *constantly* on their respective farms &ca. and to obey his orders.

This, in general, is the outline of the business, to detail the particular parts, would be tedious; and to a man of experience would be unnecessary. I am altogether in the farming and meadowing line; the last of which I have much grds. propr. for and want to encrease them considerably.

I will now tell you frankly what kind of a person I must engage to conduct my business *well*. Besides being sober, and a man of integrity, he must possess a great deal of activity and firmness, to make the under Overseers do their duty strictly. He must be a man of foresight and arrangement; to combine and carry matters on to advantage; and he must not have these things to learn after he comes to me. He must be a farmer bred, and understand it in all its parts. I would wish him too to understand grasing, and particularly the care and management of Stock. How to Ditch, Hedge &ca., and how to conduct a Dairy.

Now let me request you to declare truly, whether from practice the matters here detailed are, or could soon be made familiar to you, designating those which you have a competent practical knowledge of, from those which you may be less perfect in. A letter put into the Post Office at Fredericksburgh, directed to me in Philadelphia, will be certain of arriving safe, and may enable me to say something more decisive to you in my next, by way of reply to your answer to this letter.

I ought to have added, that the only cause of Mr. Pearces leaving my business is, an increasing Rheumatic affection which he says will not allow him to discharge his duty as he conceives he ought; for which reason, and thinking it the part of

an honest man to retire. He has, at one of my farms a good dwelling house pleasantly situated; and every thing comfortably about him. I am &c.

*To JOHN FITZGERALD

Baltimore, August 19, 1796.

Dear Sir: I intended to have written to you on the Subject of the enclosed letter, from the Federal City, but by dining in a large company at Mr. Laws (the day I parted with you) and examining the public buildings afterwards, I was prevented: And letters from the Secretary of State which I met on the Road, and which required my attention yesterday afternoon I was again prevented from doing it in time for the Mail of this Morning.

After giving this information (wch. is designed principally for Mr. Gill) let me request the favor of you to inform, that I am willing to accomodate his wishes for a Deed in Fee, for the land he leased of me, upon the Security of Bank-Stock (agreeably to the proposal in his letter) Provided the said Stock is transferred, or so secured to me at *his* expence, in such a manner as the Attorney-General shall deem proper and adequate; and provided also, I receive my proportion of the Dividends when paid, or they become due, in proportion to the quantum of Rent which may be due at the time; for instance, my Rent being £130 pr. Annum, if the dividends are paid half yearly, I shall expect to receive £65 at each of those times, and if quarter yearly £32 10. This it may be said will amount (calculating interest thereon) to more than the simple Rent; I acknowledge it; but as no security in my estimation is to be compared with that of Land, the difference and advantage of these payments are now an equivolent.

I have mentioned the Attorney General (Mr. Lee) because he drew the former writings, and is better acquainted with the principle by which I was governed than any other: but it is not my intention to incur any expence in affecting this change, nor shall I make any apology for the trouble I am giving you in doing it, being with great esteem etc.[48]

*To WILLIAM PEARCE

Baltimore, August 19, 1796.

Mr. Pearce: At this place I have seen Mr. Thos. Ringgold, who is very desirous of availing himself of your testimony in his pending suit. I have told him, that my consent to this measure has been freely given. and that it depends entirely upon yourself and the State of your health whether you attend or not.

Mentioning to him, the probability of your quitting the Superintendence of my business, he said it was reported, that a person of the name of Cannon, who manages for Mr. Saml. Chew was about to leave that employ and that in his opinion he was most excellently qualified for such a trust as mine.

You know that it is not my inclination to part with you, but if you are decided on doing it it will be better both for you and me (if I can get a *suitable* person as a successor) that it should take place at the usual time (the first of Jany.) than in March or April when it is not probable I should be able to find a competent character unengaged to superintend my concerns for the Remainder of that year.

By These considerations, and understanding further, from Mr. Ringgold, that you are well acquainted with the person and character of Mr. Cannon, I am lead to request, if you should

[48] From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach, of New York City.

go to the Eastern shore, that you would ascertain with precision whether he means to quit Mr. Chew's Service or not. And if he does, and you, (who know the nature of my concerns so well) should be *clearly* of opinion that he is competent to the judicious management of them, that you would know whether he would undertake the trust, and on what terms, for I never gave more than a hundd. pounds Virga. cury. to any except yourself nor do I think I shall ever do it again to any other whose character is not perfectly established.

It is not my wish to entice Mr. Cannon (however deserving he may be) from Mr. Chew, but if he has thoughts of leaving that Gentleman, I may as well apply to him if you do not remain as another and it is necessary for me to hear from you as soon as possible on this subject, as some persons have already offered as managers, and others may.

If you have not re-engaged Violet and Cash, fail not to use your best exertions to supply their place, especially from the best farming parts of the Eastern shore, if it can be accomplished. A letter from you to me, written from the Eastern shore, will certainly get to hand if it is put in the line of any Post. I wish you well and am etc.[49]

To JEREMIAH WADSWORTH

Philadelphia, August 23, 1796.

Dear Sir: Be so good as to inform me of the precise time, and at what place in the City of New York, the horse you were so obliging as to procure for me can be delivered; and a person shall be there in order to receive him: and the sooner, the more convenient it will be for me.

[49] From a photostat of the original through the kindness of E. Francis Riggs, of Hyattsville, Md.

Let the account of his expences for feed and pasturage; and whatever you shall agree to give the Post Rider (or who ever brings him to New York) for his trouble, and the expence of doing it, be mentioned in your letter; and the person who goes for him shall be furnished with money to pay the whole. The One hundred and thirty dollars; the cost of him, has, as I presume you have been advised, been paid agreeably to your desire.

My best respects attend Mrs and Miss Wadsworth; and with very great esteem and regard I am etc.[50] [C. H. S.]

*To RUFUS KING

(Private)

Philadelphia, August 25, 1796.

Dear Sir: Will you do me the favor to cause the enclosed notification to be inserted in some public Paper, agreeably to the Decree of the High Court of Chancery in Virginia, annexed thereto. It has been a long, troublesome and vexatious business to me; and I wish to close it *finally* and *effectually* in the manner designated. One part of which (depositing of the money) I have already complied with, and wish to do the same by the other part, namely, the Publication in England.

The Persons interested (if any of them are in existence) lives, most probably, at or near Newcastle in Northumberland County England. Whether it would be best therefore to send it there in the first instance for publication, or to publish it in the Metropolis (London) with a request that it may be re-published there I leave to your better judgment in these matters. What ever expence is incured be pleased either to charge in

[50] From the printed text in *Letters of George Washington in the Library of the Connecticut Historical Society* (Hartford: 1932).

your public account, or send me a note of it, and the amount shall in either case be paid to the Secretary of State here.

I am sorry, and almost ashamed to give you trouble in so trifling (though to me, interesting a business) but as I conceived it would be the most effectual mode of executing it, I rely on your goodness to excuse it; and to send me one of the Papers containing the publication of the notice.

I hope you and family had a short and pleasant passage. Present me if you please to Mrs. King, and be assured of the esteem and regard etc. [N.Y.H.S.]

To JAMES MONROE

Philadelphia, August 25, 1796.

Dear Sir: Your favor of the 24th. of March, written in cipher, never got to my hands until the 10th instant at Mount Vernon; nor were the contents of it known to me until my arrival in this city on the 21st. For the information contained in it, and your attention thereto, I offer you my best thanks.

Having no clew by which to discover the fact, I am very much at a loss to conjecture by what means a private letter of mine, written to a friend and sent by an American vessel, should have got into the hands of the French Directory. I shall readily acknowledge, however, that the one you allude to, directed to Mr. Gour. Morris, was a long and confidential one;[51] but I deny that there is any thing contained in it, that the French Government could take exception to, unless the expression of an ardent wish that the United States might remain in peace with *all the world* taking no part in the disputes of *any* part of it, should have produced this effect. Giving it as my further opinion that the sentiments of the mass of citizens in this country, were in unison with mine.

[51] See Washington's letter to Gouverneur Morris, Dec. 22, 1795, *ante*.

Confidential as this Letter was expected to be, I have no objection to its being seen by *anybody;* and there is certainly some mistake in saying I had no copy thereof, when there is a *press* one now before me; in which I discover no expression, that in the eye of liberality and candour would be deemed objectionable.

To understand the scope and design of *my* letter properly, and to give it a fair interpretation, it is necessary to observe that it was written (as will appear by the contents of it) in answer to very long ones from the gentleman to whom it was addressed, which contained much political information of the state of things in different parts of Europe; and related among others, the substance of a conversation, in which he and lord Grenville, as private gentlemen, had just been engaged; and in which it was observed by the latter, that if they were to judge from the publications in this Country, the disposition of it was unfriendly to Great Britain; but in free Countries he could readily account for such publications. However, that there was *one* which wore a more serious aspect, as indicative of the sense of the Government, and he alluded to Colo. Innes's report of his proceedings in Kentucky.

In my noticing this part of Mr. Morris's communication, I tell him, that, with respect to the publication of that report, it was an unauthorized act; and declared by that gentleman, as soon as he saw it in the gazettes, to have been done incorrectly: and that with relation to the temper of the people of the United States, as it respected Great Britain, his lordship ought not to be surprised, if it appeared disturbed and irritated, after the sense of the Government had been so often expressed in strong remonstrances against the conduct of the Indian Agents, privateersmen, impressment of our seamen, insults of their ships of War &c., &c. Adding that it afforded us very little satisfaction,

their disclaiming these as unauthorized acts (which the British Administration had done in some instances) while the actors were suffered to go unpunished. I dwelt chiefly and fully on this part of his letter, and reminded him of the indifference with which the advances of the United States to form a commercial treaty with Great Britain, as well since as before the establishment of the present Government, had been received; and concluded by saying, that a liberal policy towards us (though I did not suppose sentiments of that sort from me to a member of the british Administration would have much weight) was the only road to a perfect reconciliation; and that if he should again converse with lord Grenville on this subject he was at liberty, unofficially, to express these as my sentiments.

Thus, Sir, you have the substance candidly related, of a letter which, you say, you have been told by a person, "who has read it, has produced an ill effect," when in my opinion the contrary (viewing it the light of an unreserved and confidential communication) ought to have been produced. for I repeat it again, that unless my pacific disposition was displeasing, nothing else could have given umbrage by the most rigid construction of the letter; or that will shew in the remotest degree any disposition on my part to favor the british interests in their dispute with France.

My conduct in public and private life, as it relates to the important struggle in which the latter nation is engaged, has been uniform from the commencement of it, and may be summed up in a few words; that I have always wished well to the French revolution; that I have always given it as my decided opinion that no Nation had a right to intermeddle in the internal concerns of another; that every one had a right to form and adopt whatever government they liked best to live under themselves. and that if this country could, consistently with its engagements,

maintain a strict neutrality and thereby preserve peace, it was bound to do so by motives of policy, interest, and every other consideration, that ought to actuate a people situated and circumstanced as we are; already deeply in debt, and in a convalescent state, from the struggle we have been engaged in ourselves.

On these principles, I have steadily and uniformly proceeded; bidding defiance to calumnies calculated to sow the seeds of distrust in the French nation, and to excite their belief of an influence, possessed by Great Britain in the councils of this Country; than which nothing is more unfounded and injurious; the object of its pacific conduct being truly delineated above. I am, &c.[52]

*To ALEXANDER HAMILTON

(Private)

Philadelphia, August 25, 1796.

My dear Sir: I have given the Paper[53] herewith enclosed, several serious and attentive readings; and prefer it greatly to the other draughts, being more copious on material points; more dignified on the whole; and with less egotism. Of course less exposed to criticism, and better calculated to meet the eye of discerning readers (foreigners particularly, whose curiosity I have little doubt will lead them to inspect it attentively and to pronounce their opinions on the performance).

When the first draught was made, besides having an eye to the consideration above mentioned, I thought the occasion was fair (as I had latterly been the subject of considerable invective) to say what is there contained of myself; and as the

[52] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[53] Hamilton's "Original Major Draft" of the Farewell Address.

Address was designed in a more especiall manner for the Yeomanry of this Country I conceived it was proper they should be informed of the object of that abuse; the silence with which it had been treated; and the consequences which would naturally flow from such unceasing and virulent attempts to destroy all confidence in the Executive part of the Government; and that it was best to do it in language that was plain and intelligable to their understandings.

The draught now sent comprehends the most, if not all these matters; is better expressed; and I am persuaded goes as far as it ought with respect to any personal mention of myself.

I should have seen no occasion myself, for its undergoing a revision. But as your letter of the 30th. Ulto. which accompanied it, intimates a wish to do this, and knowing that it can be more correctly done after a writing has been out of sight for sometime than while it is in hand, I send it in conformity thereto; with a request, however, that you wd. return it as soon as you have carefully reexamined it; for it is my intention to hand it to the Public before I leave this City, to which I came for the purpose of meeting General Pinckney; receiving the Ministers from Spain and Holland; and for the dispatch of other business which could not be so well executed by written communications between the heads of Departments and myself as by oral conferences. So soon as these are accomplished I shall return; at any rate I expect to do so by, or before the tenth of next month for the purpose of bringing up my family for the Winter.

I shall expunge all that is marked in the paper as unimportant &ca. &ca. and as you perceive some marginal notes, written with a pencil, I pray you to give the sentiments so noticed mature consideration. After which, and in every other part, if change or alteration takes place in the draught, let them be so

clearly interlined, erazed, or referred to in the Margin as that no mistake may happen in copying it for the Press.

To what Editor in *this* City do you think it had best be sent for Publication? Will it be proper to accompany it with a note to him, expressing (as the principal design of it is to remove doubts at the next Election) that it is hoped, or expected, that the State Printers will give it a place in their Gazettes; or preferable to let it be carried by my private Secretary to that Press which is destined to usher it to the World and suffer it to work its way afterwards? If you think the first most eligable, let me ask you to sketch such a note as you may judge applicable to the occasion. With affectionate regard I am always yours.[54]

*To JOHN W. BRONAUGH

Philadelphia, August 28, 1796.

Sir: Among the first things I did after my arrival in this City, was to look for the Bond given to me by your father, for conveyance of the land he sold me on the great Kanhawa; and among my Papers *for those Lands* I found the Bond; but could find no Deed conveying the said Land, although in the same bundle I perceived conveyances from others, from whom I had made similar purchases. I have, notwithstanding, some recollection that your father has made, or did propose to make me, a Deed for the 2000 Acres of land that is mentioned in the Bond; but as there is no such Deed among those Papers which

[54] From the *Hamilton Papers* in the Library of Congress.

Hamilton sent to Washington (August 10) another draft "on the plan of incorporating. Whichever you may prefer, if there be any part you wish to transfer from one to another any part to be changed; or if there be any material idea in your own draft which has happened to be omitted and which you wish introduced; in short if there be any thing further in the matter in which I can be of any [service], I will with great pleasure obey your commands." Hamilton's letter and also his "Draft for incorporating in Address" are in the New York Public Library. Both are printed in Paltsits's *Washington's Farewell Address.*

contain my title to the Lands on the Kenhawa, As the recollection of what I have mentioned above (from the deversified scenes I have passed through since) is more like a dream than reality; and as the Bond is of no importance to him, if he has complied with the Conditions of it, but *all important* to me if he has not, I shall postpone the surrender of it until the fact respecting this matter can be explained.

Let me pray you therefore to learn from your father when, and where the conveyance was made, and if he is enabled so to do, to inform me in what Court it was recorded, for if the event did happen (as I presume it did) the Deed as it is not among my Land Papers must be in Clerks Office where it was deposited for the purpose of recording. I am etc. [M. L.]

TALK TO THE CHEROKEE NATION

City of Philadelphia, August 29, 1796.

Beloved Cherokees: Many years have passed since the White people first came to America. In that long space of time many good men have considered how the condition of the Indian natives of the country might be improved; and many attempts have been made to effect it. But, as we see at this day, all these attempts have been nearly fruitless. I also have thought much on this subject, and anxiously wished that the various Indian tribes, as well as their neighbours, the White people, might enjoy in abundance all the good things which make life comfortable and happy. I have considered how this could be done; and have discovered but one path that could lead them to that desirable situation. In this path I wish all the Indian nations to walk. From the information received concerning you, my beloved Cherokees, I am inclined to hope that you are prepared to take this path and disposed to pursue it. It may seem a little

difficult to enter; but if you make the attempt, you will find every obstacle easy to be removed. Mr. Dinsmoor, my beloved agent to your nation, being here, I send you this talk by him. He will have it interpreted to you, and particularly explain my meaning.

Beloved Cherokees,

You now find that the game with which your woods once abounded, are growing scarce; and you know when you cannot meet a deer or other game to kill, that you must remain hungry; you know also when you can get no skins by hunting, that the traders will give you neither powder nor cloathing; and you know that without other implements for tilling the ground than the hoe, you will continue to raise only scanty crops of corn. Hence you are sometimes exposed to suffer much from hunger and cold; and as the game are lessening in numbers more and more, these sufferings will increase. And how are you to provide against them? Listen to my words and you will know.

My beloved Cherokees,

Some among you already experience the advantage of keeping cattle and hogs: let all keep them and increase their numbers, and you will ever have a plenty of meet. To these add sheep, and they will give you cloathing as well as food. Your lands are good and of great extent. By proper management you can raise live stock not only for your own wants, but to sell to the White people. By using the plow you can vastly increase your crops of corn. You can also grow wheat, (which makes the best bread) as well as other useful grain. To these you will easily add flax and cotton, which you may dispose of to the White people, or have it made up by your own women into cloathing for yourselves. Your wives and daughters can soon learn to spin and weave; and to make this certain, I have

directed Mr. Dinsmoor, to procure all the necessary apparatus for spinning and weaving, and to hire a woman to teach the use of them. He will also procure some plows and other implements of husbandry, with which to begin the improved cultivation of the ground which I recommend, and employ a fit person to shew you how they are to be used. I have further directed him to procure some cattle and sheep for the most prudent and industrious men, who shall be willing to exert themselves in tilling the ground and raising those useful animals. He is often to talk with you on these subjects, and give you all necessary information to promote your success. I must therefore desire you to listen to him; and to follow his advice. I appointed him to dwell among you as the Agent of the United States, because I judged him to be a faithful man, ready to obey my instructions and to do you good.

But the cares of the United States are not confined to your single nation. They extend to all the Indians dwelling on their borders. For which reason other agents are appointed; and for the four southern nations there will be a general or principal agent who will visit all of them, for the purpose of maintaining peace and friendship among them and with the United States; to superintend all their affairs; and to assist the particular agents with each nation in doing the business assigned them. To such general or principal agent I must desire your careful attention. He will be one of our greatly beloved men. His whole time will be employed in contriving how to do you good, and you will therefore act wisely to follow his advice. The first general or principal agent will be Colonel Benjamin Hawkins, a man already known and respected by you. I have chosen him for this office because he is esteemed for a good man; has a knowledge of Indian customs, and a particular love and friendship for all the Southern tribes.

Beloved Cherokees,

What I have recommended to you I am myself going to do. After a few moons are passed I shall leave the great town and retire to my farm. There I shall attend to the means of increasing my cattle, sheep and other useful animals; to the growing of corn, wheat, and other grain, and to the employing of women in spinning and weaving; all which I have recommended to you, that you may be as comfortable and happy as plenty of food, clothing and other good things can make you.

Beloved Cherokees,

When I have retired to my farm I shall hear of you; and it will give me great pleasure to know that you have taken my advice, and are walking in the path which I have described. But before I retire, I shall speak to my beloved man, the Secretary of War, to get prepared some medals, to be given to such Cherokees as by following my advice shall best deserve them. For this purpose Mr. Dinsmoor is from time to time to visit every town in your nation. He will give instructions to those who desire to learn what I have recommended. He will see what improvements are made; who are most industrious in raising cattle; in growing corn, wheat, cotton and flax; and in spinning and weaving; and on those who excel these rewards are to be bestowed.

Beloved Cherokees,

The advice I here give you is important as it regards your nation; but still more important as the event of the experiment made with you may determine the lot of many nations. If it succeeds, the beloved men of the United States will be encouraged to give the same assistance to all the Indian tribes within their boundaries. But if it should fail, they may think it vain to make any further attempts to better the condition of any Indian tribe; for the richness of the soil and mildness of the air render

your country highly favorable for the practice of what I have recommended.

Beloved Cherokees,

The wise men of the United States meet together once a year, to consider what will be for the good of all their people. The wise men of each separate state also meet together once or twice every year, to consult and do what is good for the people of their respective states. I have thought that a meeting of your wise men once or twice a year would be alike useful to you. Every town might send one or two of its wisest counsellors to talk together on the affairs of your nation, and to recommend to your people whatever they should think would be serviceable. The beloved agent of the United States would meet with them. He would give them information of those things which are found good by the white people, and which your situation will enable you to adopt. He would explain to them the laws made by the great council of the United States, for the preservation of peace; for the protection of your lands; for the security of your persons; for your improvement in the arts of living, and for promoting your general welfare. If it should be agreeable to you that your wise men should hold such meetings, you will speak your mind to my beloved man, Mr. Dinsmoor, to be communicated to the President of the United States, who will give such directions as shall be proper.

Beloved Cherokees,

That this talk may be known to all your nation, and not forgotten, I have caused it to be printed, and directed one, signed by my own hand, to be lodged in each of your towns. The Interpreters will, on proper occasions, read and interpret the same to all your people.

Beloved Cherokees,

Having been informed that some of your chiefs wished to see me in Philadelphia, I have sent them word that I would receive

a few of the most esteemed. I now repeat that I shall be glad to see a small number of your wisest chiefs; but I shall not expect them 'till November. I shall take occasion to agree with them on the running of the boundary line between your lands and ours, agreeably to the treaty of Holston. I shall expect them to inform me what chiefs are to attend the running of this line, and I shall tell them whom I appoint to run it; and the time and place of beginning may then be fixed.

I now send my best wishes to the Cherokees, and pray the Great spirit to preserve them.[55]

*To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Saturday, ½ past 12 [August —, 1796][56]

Dr. Sir: If it is not too late for Fenno's Paper[57] of this Afternoon, an extract from Chapins[58] letter, respecting the removal of the Artillery, Stores &ca. from Niagara,[59] to the other side of the River (British side) might afford pleasing information. I presume there can be no doubt of its authenticity. Yrs. etc.

[H. S. P.]

*To ALEXANDER HAMILTON

(Private)

Philadelphia, September 1, 1796.

My dear Sir: About the middle of last Week I wrote to you; and that it might escape the eye of the Inquisitive (for some

[55] From the broadside in the *Washington Papers*, which is signed, in manuscript, by Washington. A second broadside, also signed by the President, is in the *Washington Papers*. It is indorsed by Washington: "First—drawn but not sent being afterwds. altered." This varies considerably from the above text.

[56] This letter is given the assigned date of 1796 by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. It is one of those removed from the *Washington Papers* by William B. Sprague.

[57] John Fenno's *Gazette of the United States and Philadelphia Daily Advertiser*.

[58] Israel(?) Chapin. His letter, no copy of which is now found in the *Washington Papers*, probably reached Philadelphia by the end of August.

[59] The American troops under Capt. James Bruff took possession of Fort Niagara Aug. 10, 1796.

of my letters have lately been pried into) I took the liberty of putting it under a cover to Mr. Jay.

Since then, revolving on the Paper[60] that was enclosed therein; on the various matters it contained; and on the first expression of the advice or recommendation which was given in it, I have regretted that another subject (which in my estimation is of interesting concern to the well-being of this country) was not touched upon also: I mean Education *generally* as one of the surest means of enlightening and givg. just ways of thinkg to our Citizens, but particulary the establishment of a University; where the Youth from *all parts* of the United States might receive the polish of Erudition in the Arts, Sciences and Belle Letters; and where those who were disposed to run a political course, might not only be instructed in the theory and principles, but (this Seminary being at the Seat of the General Government) where the Legislature wd. be in Session half the year, and the Interests and politics of the Nation of course would be discussed, they would lay the surest foundation for the practical part also.

But that which would render it of the highest importance, in my opinion, is, that the Juvenal period of life, when friendships are formed, and habits established that will stick by one; the youth, or young men from different parts of the United States would be assembled together, and would by degrees discover that there was not that cause for those jealousies and prejudices which one part of the Union had imbibed against another part: of course, sentiments of more liberality in the general policy of the Country would result from it. What, but the mixing of people from different parts of the United States during the War rubbed off these impressions? A century in the ordinary intercourse, would not have accomplished what

[60] The Farewell Address.

the Seven years association in Arms did: but that ceasing, prejudices are beginning to revive again, and never will be eradicated so effectually by any other means as the intimate intercourse of characters in early life, who, in all probability, will be at the head of the councils of this country in a more advanced stage of it.

To shew that this is no *new* idea of mine, I may appeal to my early communications to Congress; and to prove how seriously I have reflected on it since, and how well disposed I have been, and still am, to contribute my aid towards carrying the measure into effect, I enclose you the extract of a letter from me to the Governor of Virginia on this Subject, and a copy of the resolves of the Legislature of that State in consequence thereof.

I have not the smallest doubt that this donation (when the Navigation is in complete operation, which it certainly will be in less than two years), will amount to twelve or £1500 Sterlg a year, and become a rapidly increasing fund. The Proprietors of the Federal City have talked of doing something handsome towards it likewise; and if Congress would appropriate some of the Western lands to the same uses, funds sufficient, and of the most permanent and increasing sort might be so established as to envite the ablest Professors in Europe, to conduct it.

Let me pray you, therefore, to introduce a Section in the Address expressive of these sentiments, and recommendatory of the measure; without any mention, however, of my proposed personal contribution to the plan.[61]

[61] Hamilton answered (September 4), that "The idea of the university is one of those which I think will be most properly reserved for your speech at the opening of the session. A general suggestion respecting education will very fitly come into the address."

On September 5 Hamilton wrote again: "I return the draft corrected agreeably to your intimations. You will observe a short paragraph added respecting *Education*. As to the establishment of a University, it is a point which in connection with military schools, and some other things, I meant, agreeably to your desire to suggest to you, as parts of your Speech at the opening of the season. . . . I think it will be advisable

Such a Section would come in very properly after the one which relates to our religious obligations, or in a preceeding part, as one of the recommendatory measures to counteract the evils arising from Geographical discriminations. With Affecte. regard etc.[62]

*To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

(Private)

Thursday Morning, September 1, [1796.]

Dear Sir: Enclosed is the name, and description of the Girl I mentioned to you last night. She has been the particular attendent on Mrs. Washington since she was ten years old; and was handy and useful to her being perfect Mistress of her needle.

We have heard that she was seen in New York by someone who knew her, directly after she went off. And since by Miss Langden,[63] in Portsmouth;[64] who meeting her one day in the Street, and knowing her, was about to stop and speak to her, but she brushed quickly by, to avoid it.

By her being seen in New York (if the fact be so) it is not probable she went immediately to Portsmouth by Water from this City; but whether she travelled by land, or Water to the latter, it is certain the escape has been planned by some one who knew what he was about, and had the means to defray the expence of it and to entice her off; for not the least suspicion

simply to send the address by your Secretary to *Dunlap*. It will of course find its way into all the other papers. Some person on the spot ought to be charged with a careful examination of the impression by the proof sheet."

Hamilton's letters are in the New York Public Library and are printed in Paltsits's *Washington's Farewell Address*.

[62] From the *Hamilton Papers* in the Library of Congress.

[63] Langdon.

[64] New Hampshire.

was entertained of her going, or having formed a connexion with any one who could induce her to such an Act.

Whether she is Stationary at Portsmouth, or was there *en passant* only, is uncertain; but as it is the last we have heard of her, I would thank you for writing to the Collector of that Port, and him for his endeavours to recover, and send her back: What will be the best method to effect it, is difficult for me to say. If enquiries are made openly, her Seducer (for she is simple and inoffensive herself) would take the alarm, and adopt instant measures (if he is not tired of her) to secrete or remove her. To sieze, and put her on board a Vessel bound immediately to this place, or to Alexandria which I should like better, seems at first view, to be the safest and lease expensive. But if she is discovered, the Collector, I am persuaded, will pursue such measures as to him shall appear best, to effect those ends; and the cost shall be re-embursed and with thanks besides.

If positive proof is required, of the identity of the person, Miss Langden who must have seen her often in the Chamber of Miss Custis, and I dare say Mrs. Langden, on the occasional calls on the girl by Mrs. Washington, when she has been here, would be able to do this.

I am sorry to give you, or any one else trouble on such a trifling occasion, but the ingratitude of the girl, who was brought up and treated more like a child than a Servant (and Mrs. Washington's desire to recover her) ought not to escape with impunity if it can be avoided. With great esteem etc.

[C. H. S.]

To WILLIAM PEARCE

Philadelphia, September 5, 1796.

Mr. Pearce: Your letter of the 31st of Augt from Chester Town, came duly to hand; but as you did not acknowledge the

receipt of the one I wrote you from hence, this day week, I presume it had not got to hand; Owing, I conceive to a misapprehension of mine as to the time of closing the Mail from the Eastern shore which I find is an hour and an half earlier than those which go Southerly or Easterly. I put my letter under cover to the Postmaster in Chester Town with a request to forward it to Mount Vernon if you should have left that place.

As you appear (by your letter above mentioned) to have attended to most of the matters which were recommended in mine, your not receiving it at Chester Town was not very material.

By my letters from Mount Vernon I find the weather up to the date of them has continued extremely wet, of course Seeding must have gone on slowly, if not badly.

Washington Custis writes me that Mr. Stuart, at the River farm was very ill of a fever, on thursday last. I hope it will not prove a fatal one, and thereby add to your present difficulties in providing *good* Overseers. If Scoon is a *first rate* Overseer, I had rather give him £75 Maryland curry than run the risk of getting an indifferent one; especially if he can bring another whom *you know* to be a good one, along with him; although the wages of that other should exceed 133 1/3 dollars. I do not know what Violet's and Cash's present wages are, I did not care to increase it with them (although they may be industrious men) as they cd have no plea to ask higher wages for the year to come, than for the year past. Men who are old, experienced, and of established reputation and skill, have better ground to stand upon, than they.

Washington in his letter mentioned further that the Weavil was very much in Stuarts Wheat. If this is really the case, it is much to be regretted, but there is no other remedy but to get it out as quick as possible; and as he has no place to keep it securely

in the Chaff, to grind it up with all the dispatch the Mill is capable. He said something also about one of the Bolting cloths being out of order, or unfit for use, this will require attention.

Write me by the first Post (fridays) after you get this letter, how every thing is, and going on; for if I can accomplish the business which brot me here, I hope by Wednesday, or thursday in next week, to leave this, on my return to Mount Vernon. I wish you well and am Your friend.[65]

*To ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Philadelphia, September 6, 1796.

Dear Sir: I received yesterday, your letter of the 4th instant. If the promised paper[66] has not been sent before this reaches you, Mr. Kitt the bearer of it, who goes to New York partly on mine, and partly on his own business, will bring it safely. I only await here, now, and shall in a few days do it impatiently, for the arrival of General Pinckney.

If you think the idea of a University had better be reserved for the Speech at the opening of the Session, I am content to defer the communication of it until that period. But even in *that* case, I would pray you (as soon as convenient) to make a draught for the occasion; predicated on the ideas with which you have been furnished; looking at the sametime into what was said on this head in my *second* Speech to the *first* Congress, merely with a view to see what was said on the subject at that time; and this you will perceive was not so much to the point as I want to express now, though it may, if proper, be glanced at, to shew that the subject had caught my attention early[67]

[65] From the printed text in M. D. Conway's *George Washington and Mount Vernon*, Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4).
[66] The Farewell Address.
[67] See Eighth Annual Address, Dec. 7, 1796, *post*.

But to be candid, I much question whether a recommendation of this measure to the Legislature will have a better effect *now* than *formerly*. It may shew indeed my sense of its importance, and that is a sufficient inducement with *me* to bring the matter before the public in some shape or another, at the closing Scenes of my political exit. My object for proposing to insirt it where I did (if not improper) was to set the People to ruminating on the importance of the measure, [and the] most likely means of bringing it to pass. With much truth I am etc.[68]

To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

United States, September 6, 1796.

Having considered your Report of the fifth instant, I do hereby authorise you to take suitable and legal measures for procuring by contract or otherwise as shall appear to be most for the public Interest, four Revenue Cutters, to be employed on the Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia and South Carolina Stations. And I do hereby direct you to cause the Revenue Cutters belonging to the United States on the Maryland, Virginia and South Carolina Stations to be sold at public Auction, and to cause the proceeds of such Sales to be paid into the Treasury of the United States; and for so doing this shall be your Warrant.[69]

*To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

(Private)

Wednesday Morning, [September 7, 1796.]

Dear Sir: The principles of the Enclosed Instructions, I approve; and since they are drawn, I shall not object to the

[68] From the *Hamilton Papers* in the Library of Congress.
[69] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

Phraseology; tho' considering that it is Addressed to *our* Agent, for *his* government part of them, I think is too much in the stile of a talk to the Indians. And I think too, as he is intended for the *general* Superintendent his attentions seems to be too much confined to the Creek Nation. Yours always, and sincerely.[70]

To WILLIAM PEARCE

Philadelphia, September 11, 1796.

Mr. Pearce: Your letter of the 4th instt came to my hands yesterday, and the one you wrote me from Chester Town has also been received. My last would have informed you of the reason, which, probably, prevented your receiving a former one at that place, but which I expect has got to hand ere this; as the Postmaster was requested, in case you had left it, to send it by the Mail to Alexandria.

As your letter says very little with respect to the situation of Matters on the Farms, I have the less to say in answer to it. But wish that the Wheat may be sown as soon as possible; but not faster than the ground can be put in good Order for its reception; especially for that which was sent by Mr. Lewis.

Having made no mention of Stuart, I hope he has got well again; from the Tenor of Washingtons letter, I began to apprehend he was in danger. As you have said nothing concerning the Fly, in your stacks, I hope his account in this respect also was more the effect of his fears, than of accurate examination; but let it be closely attended to; for neither interest nor policy will suffer a Crop *made,* to be lost, in order to prepare for another which a thousand accidents may destroy before it gets into the Barn: and when, possibly, and even probably, the price may be lower than it is at present by 50 pr Ct. This, supposing no

[70] From the *McHenry Photostats* in the Library of Congress.

danger from the fly, is a strong reason for grinding up, and selling the flour before the Market is glutted with this article, from Wheat of this years growth.

Do not let the proper Season escape you, for sowing the Winter Vetch; I should conceive it ought not to be much longer delayed. But among the Books you have, of mine, it is probable the precise time, and quantity of Seed to the Acre, may be mentioned. Let these be attended to; and unless the directions are given in some authors of modern date, be more sparing of your seed than is mentioned by them. I recollect a year or two ago to have sent some grape Seed to Mount Vernon, but do not recollect what has been the result of it: but particular care ought always to be paid to these kind of Seeds as they are, generally, given to me, because they are valuable, rare, or curious.

I hope you have received favorable answers from the persons you were in treaty with on the Eastern Shore. It is very interesting to me, at all times, to have good Overseers; but may be particular so next year. Did you receive any benefit from Doctr Perkins's[71] Metallic application.[72] which, possibly ought to be repeated and continued for some time. I wish you well and am Your friend[73]

To JOHN QUINCY ADAMS

Philadelphia, September 12, 1796.

Dear Sir: To open a correspondence with you on so trifling a subject, as that which gives birth to this letter, would hardly be justified, were it not for the singularity of the case: this singularity will, I hope, apologize for the act.

[71] Dr. Elisha Perkins, of Connecticut.

[72] Perkins's "metallic tractors" treatment obtained considerable vogue.

[73] From the printed text in Conway's *George Washington and Mount Vernon*, Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4).

Some time ago, perhaps two or three months, I read in some gazette, but was so little impressed with it at the time (conceiving it to be one of those things which get into newspapers nobody knows how or why) that I cannot now recollect whether the gazette was of American or foreign production, announcing that a celebrated artist had presented, or was about to present to the President of the United States a sword of masterly workmanship, as an evidence of his veneration &c. &c.

I thought no more of the matter afterwards, until a gentleman with whom I have no acquaintance, coming from and going to I know not where, at a tavern I never could get information of, came across this sword (for it is presumed to be the same) pawned for thirty dollars; which he paid, left it in Alexandria, nine miles from my house, in Virginia, with a person who refunded him the money and sent the sword to me.

This is all I have been able to learn of this curious affair. The blade is highly wrought, and decorated with many military emblems. It has my name engraved thereon, and the following inscription (translated from the Dutch): "Condemner of despotism, Preserver of Liberty, glorious man, take from my sons hands this Sword, I beg you. A. Sollingen." The hilt is either gold, or richly plated with that metal; and the whole carries with it the form of an horseman's sword, or long sabre.

The matter, as far as it appears at present, is a perfect enigma. How it should have come into this country without a letter, or an accompanying message: how afterwards it should have got into such loose hands; and whither the person having it in possession was steering his course, remains as yet to be explained; some of them, probably, can only be explained by the maker; and the maker no otherwise to be discovered than by the inscription and name, "A. Sollingen," who, from the impression which dwells on my mind, is of Amsterdam.

If, Sir, with this clew you can develope the history of this sword,[74] the value of it; the character of the maker, and his probable object in sending it; it would oblige me; and, by relating these facts to him might obviate doubts, which otherwise might be entertained by him of its fate, or its reception. With great esteem, &c.[75]

*To CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY

Philadelphia, September 12, 1796.

My dear Sir: After furnishing you with the following copies of Letters,[76] it is scarcely necessary to add any thing by way of explanation of my motives for doing it. However, I will briefly add that, from the arrival of Mr. Gouvr. Morris in Europe, up to the date of his last letter to me in June of the present year, I have received much interesting and useful information from him relative to the political state of things on the other side of the Atlantic: That from the multiplicity of business with which I have been continually overwhelmed, I very rarely acknowledged the receipt of his letters: But upon receiving that of the 3d. of July 1795 (a copy of which follows) I was struck, forcibly with the idea, as well from the style and manner, as from its being [confined] to a single subject, that it had, or was intended to have passed under the eye of Lord Grenville; although no intimation thereof was given to me.

[74] The sword was a gift from Theophilus Alte, a manufacturer of Solingen, Holland. It had been sent to the President by Alte's son, Daniel. Alte's letter of Jan. 20, 1797, inquiring if the sword had been received, is in the *Washington Papers*. On Nov. 29, 1797, Alte wrote again to the President, asking for information of his son, who had not returned to Rhenish Prussia. This sword is now at Mount Vernon.

[75] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[76] There were inclosed in this letter copies of Gouverneur Morris's letter to Washington, July 3, 1795; Washington's letter to Gouverneur Morris, Dec. 22, 1795; James Monroe's letter to Washington, Mar. 24, 1796; and Washington's letter to James Monroe, Aug. 25, 1796.

Under this impression, it was natural to suppose that my answer, or the result of it would also be communicated to that Minister; I resolved therefore to frame it accordingly, that Lord Grenville might find from *that* mode, as well as from the ordinary course of official communications, in what light the people of this Country viewed the conduct of his towards it.

I little expected indeed, that a private letter of mine to a friend, would have found a place in the Bureau of the French Directory. Less should I have suspected, that any exception would, or could be taken at the Sentiments expressed in the one that has got there. But as intimations of the contrary have been given in Colonel Monroes letter, I have thought it expedient to furnish you with *all* the documents relative thereto, with this short history of the rise and progress of it; that you might be enabled, if more is said on the Subject, and occasion should require it, to set the matter right by a plain and simple statement of facts. With great esteem &c.[77]

To JAMES WOOD

Philadelphia, September 12, 1796.

Dear Sir: By a recurrence to the acts of the last session of Congress, you will find one for disposing of the ungranted lands North West of the Ohio; and for appointing a Surveyor General for the purposes therein mentioned. And you may have heard that Mr. De Witt, who was geographer to the army at the close of the War, after the decease of Mr. Irskine,[78] and at present the Surveyor General of the State of New York, a man of profound knowledge in mathematics, and sufficiently

[77] This letter is marked "private" in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*, but is not so marked on the letter sent.

[78] Erskine.

versed in astronomy, was nominated to that Office, and has declined the acceptance of it.

It is yet vacant, and you have been mentioned to me as a gentleman to whom it might be acceptable. Without taking then a circuitous rout to ascertain this fact, I shall apply immediately to yourself for information; and will frankly ask, because I am sure you will candidly answer, if the appointment should meet your wishes, whether your knowledge in mathematics; practical Surveying, and so much of astronomy as is useful to a skilfull exercise of the latter, for discovering the latitude, meridian, &c. now are, or easily could be made familiar to you.

These questions are propounded because affirmative qualifications are essential; for it will readily occur to you, that he who is to examine and employ others, direct their proceedings, and inspect their works, ought not to be ignorant of the principles which are to be the rule for their conduct.

It is a very honorable and important office; There is none perhaps that requires more integrity and vigilance in the execution, to prevent improper speculation and abuse. The Officer holding it must reside in the Country where the business will be chiefly transacted.

As the season and circumstances begin now to press for an appointment, and as my continuance here, and the road I shall travel back to Virginia, for the purpose of returning with my family for the winter, are uncertain, I request the favor of you, to put your answer to this letter under cover to the secretary of State, who will be directed to open it and to fill up the blank Commission which I shall deposit in his Office, with your name if you are disposed to accept it; or with that of another who is held in contemplation, if you do not. You may, if not too

troublesome, address a duplicate to me at Mount Vernon, to remain in the post-office at Alexandria until called for. With great esteem &c.[79]

To THE SECRETARIES OF STATE, TREASURY AND WAR

Philadelphia, September 14, 1796.

Sir: As I cannot, without peculiar inconvenience to my private concerns, remain in this City beyond sunday next; I desire that all the business in your department which calls for my immediate attention, may be presented to me in the course of this week.[79]

*To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Philadelphia, September 14, 1796.

Sir: The enclosed Conditions appear proper, but as there are certain principles and practices that govern in such cases, it would be too hazardous to Give an opinion with out consulting them, and it is impossible for me to go into such detail.[80]

*To GOVERNOR ROBERT BROOKE

Philadelphia, September 15, 1796.

Sir: The Commonwealth of Virginia, having manifested their approbation of my design, to apply the hundred shares in the James River Company, which they had before put at my disposal, to the use of a Siminary to be erected in such part of the State as they should deem most proper; and in consequence

[79] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

At least two separate forgeries, by Robert Spring, of this letter to James Wood exist. In each of these forgeries an important portion of the letter is omitted.

[80] From the *McHenry Photostats* in the Library of Congress.

of this reference to their opinion, the Legislature having requested me to appropriate them to a Seminary at such place in the upper Country as I should think most convenient to a majority of its Inhabitants: After careful enquiries, to ascertain that place, I have, upon the fullest consideration of all circumstances, destined those Shares to the use of Liberty-Hall Academy, in Rockbridge County.[81]

It would seem to me proper that this determination should be promulgated by some official act of the Executive of Virginia; and the Legislature may expect it; for the purpose of general information. With due consideration and respect I am, &c. [V. S. L.]

To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, September 18, 1796.

Gentlemen: More than once, the Spanish Minister expressed, with pleasing solicitude, the intentions of his Government to erect in the Federal City a suitable Building for the accommodation of its Representative, near the Government of the United States; provided a convenient and agreeable Site could be obtained for the purpose. I always answered that this measure would be very pleasing and agreeable to me; and that I was sure the Commissioners of the Federal City would feel happy in accommodating him with ground for these Buildings.

But on Tuesday last he told me, that application had been made to you through, or by Mr. Barry,[82] and difficulties (which he was not able to explain to me) had occurred. I hope they can be removed, for in my opinion a precedent of this sort may

[81] Later called "Washington College," and after the presidency of Gen. Robert E. Lee, "Washington and Lee University."

[82] James Barry.

influence other foreign Governments to follow the example, which would, I conceive, contribute much more to the advancement of the City than any pecuniary consideration to be derived from the Sale of the Lots.

I shall not dwell however on the subject in this letter, as I expect in eight or ten days to be in the City, and will renew the matter then. With very great esteem etc.[83]

*FAREWELL ADDRESS[84]

United States, September 19, 1796.

Friends, and Fellow-Citizens: The period for a new election of a Citizen, to Administer the Executive government of the United States, being not far distant, and the time actually arrived, when your thoughts must be employed in designating

[83] From a copy in the writing of George Washington Craik in *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

[84] On September 15 Washington submitted the Farewell Address to the Cabinet. Pickering wrote to him that same day (September 15): "The paper you put into my hands to-day was attentively perused by us all. I am now going over it by myself, but it will not be possible to get thro' in time to return it before bed-time. Before breakfast in the morning I will wait upon you with it." Pickering's letter is in the *Washington Papers.*

David C. Claypoole's account of the publication of the Address is printed by Paltsits. An extract follows: "A few days before the appearance of this highly interesting document in print, I received a message from the President, by his private secretary, Col. Lear, signifying his desire to see me. I waited on him at the appointed time, and found him sitting alone in the drawing-room. He received me very kindly, and after I had paid my respects to him, desired me to take a seat near him; then addressing himself to me, said, that he had for some time contemplated retiring from public life, and had at length concluded to do so at the end of the (then) present term: that he had some thoughts and reflections on the occasion, which he deemed proper to communicate to the people of the United States, in the form of an address, and which he wished to appear in the Daily Advertiser, of which I was Proprietor and editor. He paused, and I took occasion to thank him for having selected that paper as the channel of communication to the Public, especially as I viewed this choice as an evidence of his approbation of the principles and manner in which the work was conducted. He silently assented, and asked me when I could make the publication. I answered that the time should be made perfectly convenient to himself, and the following Monday was fixed on: he then said that his secretary would deliver me the Copy on the next morning (Friday), and I withdrew. After the *proof sheet* had been carefully compared with the copy, and corrected by myself, I carried two different Revises, to be examined by the President; who made but few alterations from

the person, who is to be cloathed with that important trust,[85] it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprise you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those, out of whom a choice is to be made.

I beg you, at the same time, to do me the justice to be assured, that this resolution has not been taken, without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation, which binds a dutiful citizen to his country, and that, in with drawing the tender of service which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest, no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness; but[86] am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

The acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in, the office to which your Suffrages have twice called me, have been a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty, and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire. I constantly

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the original, except in the punctuation, in which he was very minute. The publication of the Address, dated 'United States, September 17th, 1796' being completed on the 19th [bearing the same date with the Paper, Sept. 19th, 1796, being completed], I waited on the President with the original; and, in presenting it to him, expressed my regret at parting with it, and how much I should be gratified by being permitted to retain it: upon which in the most obliging manner, he handed it back to me, saying, that if I wished for it, I might keep it;—and I then took my leave."

Sparks, who prints the Farewell Address from the publication of it in Claypoole's *American Daily Advertiser*, of Sept. 19, 1796, states that he copies the following indorsement (which is in the writing of Washington) on Claypoole's paper, "designed as an instruction to the copyist, who recorded the Address in the letter-book: The letter contained in this gazette, addressed 'To the People of the United States,' is to be recorded, and in the order of its date. Let it have a blank page before and after it, so as to stand distinct. Let it be written with a letter larger and fuller than the common recording hand. And where words are printed with capital letters, it is to be done so in recording. And those other words, that are printed in italics, must be scored underneath and straight by a ruler." This newspaper, with Washington's indorsement thereon, is not now found in the *Washington Papers*. Claypoole's paper printed the Address as dated September 17, which date is followed by Sparks.

[85] At this point the words "for another term" are crossed out.

[86] The words "act under" are crossed out.

hoped, that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives, which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement, from which I had been reluctantly drawn. The strength of my inclination to do this, previous to the last Election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of our Affairs with foreign Nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea.

I rejoice, that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty, or propriety; and[87] am persuaded whatever partiality[88] may be retained for my services, that[89] in the present circumstances of our country, you will not disapprove my determination to retire.

The impressions,[90] with which I first[91] undertook the arduous trust, were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust, I will only say, that I have, with good intentions, contributed[92] towards the Organization and Administration of the government, the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious, in the outset, of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has[93] strengthned the motives to diffidence of myself; and every day the encreasing weight of years admonishes me more and more, that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied that if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my

[87] The word "that" is crossed out.
[88] The words "any portion of you may yet retain" are crossed out.
[89] The words "even they" are crossed out.
[90] The word "under" is crossed out.
[91] The word "accepted" is crossed out.
[92] The word "to" is crossed out.
[93] The words "not lessened" are crossed out.

services, they were temporary, I have the consolation to believe, that while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.[94]

In looking forward to the moment, which is intended to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment[95] of that debt of gratitude wch. I owe to my beloved country, for the many honors it has conferred upon me; still more for the stedfast confidence with which it has supported me; and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment, by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal[96] to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise, and as an instructive example in our annals, that,[97] under circumstances in which the Passions agitated in every direction were liable to[98] mislead, amidst appearances sometimes dubious, viscissitudes of fortune often discouraging, in situations in which not unfrequently want of Success has countenanced the spirit of criticism, the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts, and[99] a guarantee of the plans by which they were effected. Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to my grave, as a strong incitement to unceasing vows[1] that Heaven may continue to you the

[94] Here are crossed out the words: "May I also have that of knowing in my retreat, that the involuntary errors, I have probably committed, have been the sources of no serious or lasting mischief to our country. I may then expect to realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow-citizens, the benign influence of good laws under a free government; the ever favorite object of my heart, and the happy reward, I trust, of our mutual cares, dangers and labours." Opposite this deleted paragraph, Washington has written, in the margin: "obliterated to avoid the imputation of affected modesty."

[95] The words "demanded by" are crossed out.

[96] The words "in usefulness" are crossed out.

[97] The words "the constancy of your support" are crossed out.

[98] The words "wander and fluctuate" are crossed out.

[99] The word "the" is crossed out.

[1] The words "the only return I can henceforth make" are crossed out.

choicest tokens of its beneficence; that your Union and brotherly affection may be perpetual; that the free constitution, which is the work of your hands, may be sacredly maintained; that its Administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and Virtue; that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these States, under the auspices of liberty, may be made complete, by so careful a preservation and so prudent a use of this blessing as will acquire to them the glory[2] of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and adoption of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

Here, perhaps, I ought to stop. But a solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger, natural to that solicitude,[3] urge me on an occasion like the present, to offer to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments; which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation,[4] and which appear to me all important to the permanency of your felicity as a People. These will be offered to you with the more freedom, as you can only see in them the disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to biass his counsel. Nor can I forget, as an encouragement to it, your endulgent reception of my sentiments on a former and not dissimilar occasion

Interwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.

The Unity of Government which constitutes you one people is also now dear to you. It is justly so; for it is a main Pillar in

[2]The words "or satisfaction" are crossed out.

[3]The words "encouraged by the remembrance of your indulgent reception of my sentiments on an occasion not dissimilar to the present, urge me to offer" are crossed out.

[4]The words "and experience" are crossed out.

the Edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquility at home; your peace abroad; of your safety;[5] of your prosperity;[6] of that very Liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee, that from[7] different causes and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment, that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national Union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish[8] a cordial, habitual and immoveable attachment[9] to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the Palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned, and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our Country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest. Citizens[10] by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name

[5] The words "in every relation" are crossed out.
[6] The words "in every shape" are crossed out.
[7] The word "various" is crossed out.
[8] The words "towards it" are crossed out.
[9] The words "that you should accustom yourselves to reverence it as the palladium of your political safety and prosperity, adapting constantly your words and actions to that momentous idea; that you should watch for its preservation with jealous anxiety, discountenance whatever may suggest a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned; and frown upon the first dawning of any attempt to alienate any portion of our Country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the several parts," are crossed out.
[10] The words "of a common country by birth or choice" are crossed out.

of AMERICAN, which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of Patriotism, more than any appellation[11] derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same Religeon, Manners, Habits and political Principles. You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together. The independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint councils, and joint efforts; of common dangers, sufferings and successes.

But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your Interest. Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the Union of the whole.

The *North,* in an unrestrained[12] intercourse with the *South,* protected by the equal Laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter,[13] great additional resources of Maratime and commercial enterprise and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The *South* in the same Intercourse, benefitting by the Agency of the *North,* sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the *North,* it finds its particular navigation envigorated; and while it contributes, in different ways, to nourish and increase the general mass of the National navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a Maratime strength, to which itself is unequally adapted. The *East,* in a like intercourse with the *West,* already finds, and in the progressive improvement of interior communications, by land and water, will more and more find a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad, or manufactures at home. The *West* derives from the *East* supplies requisite to its growth and com-

[11] The words "to be" are crossed out.
[12] The word "fettered" is crossed out.
[13] The words "many of them peculiar" are crossed out.

fort, and what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the *secure* enjoyment of indispensable *outlets* for its own productions to the weight, influence, and the future Maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of Interest as *one Nation.*[14] Any other tenure by which the *West* can hold this essential advantage,[15] whether derived from its own seperate strength, or from an apostate and unnatural connection with any foregin Power, must be intrinsically precarious.[16]

[17] While then every part of our country thus[18] feels an immediate and particular Interest in Union, all the parts[19] combined cannot fail to find in the united mass of means and efforts[20] greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their Peace by foreign Nations; and,[21] what is of inestimable value! they must derive from Union an exemption from those broils and Wars between themselves, which[22] so frequently afflict neighbouring countries, not tied together by the same government; which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce, but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments and intriegues would stimulate and imbitter. Hence likewise they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown Military establishments, which under any form of Government are inauspicious to liberty, and which[23] are to be regarded as

[14] The word "The" is crossed out.
[15] The word "either" is crossed out.
[16] The words "liable every moment to be disturbed by the fluctuating combinations of the primary interests of Europe, which must be expected to regulate the conduct of the Nations of which it is composed." are crossed out.
[17] The word "And" is crossed out.
[18] The word "finds" is crossed out.
[19] The words "of it" are crossed out.
[20] The words "cannot fail to find" are crossed out.
[21] The words "which is an advantage" are crossed out.
[22] The word "inevitably" is crossed out.
[23] The words "there is reason to" are crossed out.

particularly hostile to Republican Liberty: In this sense it is, that your Union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other.

These considerations speak a persuasive language to[24] every reflecting and virtuous mind, and[25] exhibit the continuance of the UNION as a primary object of Patriotic desire. Is there a doubt, whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere? Let experience solve it. To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal.[26] We are authorized to hope that a proper organization of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective Sub divisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. 'Tis well worth a fair and full experiment[27] With such powerful and obvious motives to Union,[28] affecting all parts of our country,[29] while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason,[30] to distrust the patriotism of those, who in any quarter may endeavor to weaken its bands.[31]

[24] The word "any" is crossed out.
[25] The word "they" is crossed out.
[26] The words "'Tis natural" are crossed out.
[27] The words "It may not impossibly be found, that the spirit of party, the machinations of foreign powers, the corruption and ambition of individual citizens, are more formidable adversaries to the unity of our Empire, than any inherent difficulties in the scheme. Against these, the mounds of national opinion, national sympathy and national jealousy ought to be raised" are crossed out.
[28] The word "as" is crossed out.
[29] The word "have" is crossed out.
[30] The words "cause in the fact itself" are crossed out.
[31] The words "Besides the more serious causes already hinted as threatening our Union, there is one less dangerous, but sufficiently dangerous to make it prudent to be upon our guard against it. I allude to the petulence of party differences of opinion. It is not uncommon to hear the irritations which these excite vent themselves in declarations, that the different parts of the United States are ill affected to each other in menaces, that the Union will be dissolved by this or that measure. Intimations like these are as indiscreet as they are intemperate. Though frequently made with levity, and without any really evil intention, they have a tendency to produce the consequences which they indicate. They teach the minds of men to consider the Union as precarious—as an object to which they ought not to attach their hopes and fortunes, and thus chill the sentiment in its favor. By alarming the pride of those to whom they are addressed, they set ingenuity at work to depreciate the value of the thing and to discover reasons of indifference towards it. This is not wise. It will be

In contemplating the causes wch. may disturb our Union, it occurs as matter of serious concern, that [32] any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by *Geographical* discriminations: *Northern* and *Southern; Atlantic* and *Western;* whence designing men may endeavour to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views.[33] One of the expedients of Party to acquire influence, within particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other Districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart burnings which spring from these misrepresentations. They tend to render Alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection. The Inhabitants of our Western country have lately had a useful lesson on this [34] head. They have seen, in the Negociation by the Executive, and in the unanimous ratification by the Senate, of the Treaty with Spain, and in the universal satisfaction at that event, throughout the United States, a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them of a policy in the General Government and in the Atlantic States unfriendly to their Interests in regard to the Mississippi. They have been witnesses to the formation of two Treaties, that with G: Britain and that with Spain, which secure to them every

much wiser to habituate ourselves to reverence the Union as the palladium of our national happiness—to accommodate constantly our words and actions to that idea, and to discountenance whatever may suggest a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned." are crossed out. Washington has bracketed this paragraph in the margin and noted it as "not important enough."

[32] The words "our parties for some time past have been too much characterized by" are crossed out.

[33] The words "These discriminations, the mere contrivance of the spirit of Party, (always dexterous to seize every handle by which the passions can be wielded, and too skilful not to turn to account the sympathy of neighborhood), have furnished an argument against the Union, as evidence of a real difference of local interests and views, and serve to hazard it, by organizing larger districts of country under the leaders of contending factions, whose rivalships, prejudices and schemes of ambition, rather than the true Interest of the Country, will direct the use of their influence. If it be possible to correct this poison in the habit of our body politic, it is worthy the endeavors of the moderate and the good to effect it." are crossed out.

[34] The word "subject" is crossed out.

thing they could desire, in respect to our Foreign relations, towards confirming their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely for the preservation of [*sic*] these advantages on the UNION by wch. they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their Brethren and connect them with Aliens?

To the efficacy and permanency of Your Union, a Government for the whole is indispensable. No Alliances however strict between the parts can be an adequate substitute. They must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all Alliances in all times have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay, by the adoption of a Constitution of Government, better calculated than your former for an intimate Union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This government, the offspring of our own choice uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its Laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true Liberty. The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their Constitutions of Government. But the Constitution which at any time exists, 'till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole People, is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the People to establish Government presupposes the duty of every Individual to obey the established Government.

All obstructions to the execution of the Laws, all combinations and Associations, under whatever plausible character,

with the real design to direct, controul counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the Constituted authorities are distructive of this fundamental principle and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force; to put in the place of the delegated will of the Nation, the will of a party; often a small but artful and enterprizing minority of the Community; and, according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the Mirror of the ill concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans digested by common councils and modefied by mutual interests. However combinations or Associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends,[35] they are likely, in the course of time and things, to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the Power of the People, and to usurp for themselves the reins of Government; destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.

Towards the preservation of your Government and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite, not only that you steadily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles however specious the pretexts. one method of assault may be to effect, in the forms of the Constitution, alterations which will impair the energy of the system, and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of Governments, as of other human institutions; that experience is the surest standard, by which to test

[35] The words "and purposes" are crossed out.

the real tendency of the existing Constitution of a country; that facility in changes upon the credit of mere hypotheses and opinion exposes to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypotheses and opinion: and remember, especially, that for the efficient management of your common interests, in a country so extensive as ours, a Government of as much vigour as is consistent with the perfect security of Liberty is indispensable. Liberty itself will find in such a Government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest Guardian. It is indeed little else than a name, where the Government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of the Society within the limits prescribed by the laws and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.[36]

I have already intimated to you the danger of Parties in the State, with particular reference to the founding of them on Geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the Spirit of Party, generally

This spirit, unfortunately, is inseperable from[37] our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human Mind. It exists under different shapes in all Governments, more or less stifled, controuled, or repressed; but, in those of the popular form it is seen in its greatest rankness and is truly their worst enemy.[38]

[36] The words "Owing to you as I do a frank and free disclosure of my heart, I shall not conceal from you the belief I entertain, that your Government as at present constituted is far more likely to prove too feeble than too powerful." are crossed out.

[37] The word "human" is crossed out.

[38] The words "In Republics of narrow extent, it is not difficult for those who at any time hold the reins of Power, and command the ordinary public favor, to overturn the established order [Constitution,] in favor of their own aggrandizement. The same thing may likewise be too often accomplished in such Republics, by partial combinations of men, who though not in office, from birth, riches or other sources of distinction, have extraordinary influence and numerous retainers [adherents.] By debauching the military force, by surprising some commanding citadel, or by some

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge natural to party dissention, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries, which result, gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an Individual: and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of Public Liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight) the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of Party are sufficient to make it the interest and the duty of a wise People to discourage and restrain it.

It serves always to distract the Public Councils and enfeeble the Public administration. It agitates the Community with ill founded jealousies and false alarms, kindles the animosity of one part against another, foments occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access[39] to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy[40] and and [*sic*] the will of one country, are subjected to the policy and will of another.

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other sudden and unforeseen movement, the fate of the Republic is decided. But in Republics of large extent, usurpation can scarcely make its way through these avenues. The powers and opportunities of resistance of a wide extended and numerous nation, defy the successful efforts of the ordinary military force, or of any collections which wealth and patronage may call to their aid. In such Republics, it is safe to assert, that the conflicts of popular factions are the chief, if not the only inlets, of usurpation and Tyranny." are crossed out. The words in brackets were inserted as afterthoughts.

[39] The words "through the channels of party passions. It frequently subjects the policy of our own country to" are crossed out.

[40] The words "of some foreign country, and even enslaves the will of our Government to the will of some foreign Government." are crossed out.

There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the Administration of the Government and serve to keep alive the spirit of Liberty. This within certain limits is probably true, and in Governments of a Monarchical cast Patriotism may look with endulgence, if not with favour, upon the spirit of party. But in those of the popular character, in Governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency, it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose. And there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be, by force of public opinion, to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not to be quenched; it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest[41] instead of warming it should consume.

It is important, likewise, that the habits of thinking in a free Country should inspire caution in those entrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective Constitutional spheres; avoiding in the exercise of the Powers of one department to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create[42] whatever the form of government, a real[43] despotism. A just estimate of that love of power, and[44] proneness to abuse it, which predominates in the human heart is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power; by dividing and distributing it into different depositories, and constituting each the Guardian of the Public Weal[45] against invasions by the others, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern; some of them in our country

[41] The words "it should not only warm but" are crossed out.
[42] The word "under" is crossed out.
[43] The words "form a" are crossed out.
[44] The word "the" is crossed out.
[45] The word "from" is crossed out.

and under our own eyes. To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If in the opinion of the People, the distribution or modification of the Constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the Constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the [46] customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed. The precedent [47] must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or [48] transient benefit which the use [49] can at any time yield.

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, Religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of Patriotism, who should labour to subvert these great Pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of Men and citizens. The mere Politician, equally with the pious man ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation *desert* the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in Courts of Justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that National morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

'Tis substantially true, that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule indeed extends with more or less force to every species of free Government. Who

[46] The words "usual and natural" are crossed out.
[47] The words "of its use" are crossed out.
[48] The word "temporary" is crossed out.
[49] The word "itself" is crossed out.

that is a sincere friend to it, can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric[50]

Promote then as an object of primary importance, Institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened

As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is to use it as[51] sparingly as possible: avoiding occasions of expence by cultivating peace, but remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it; avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by[52] shunning occasions of expence, but by vigorous exertions in time of Peace to discharge the Debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burthen which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution of these maxims belongs to your Representatives, but it is necessary that public opinion should[53] cooperate. To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind, that towards the payment of debts there must be Revenue; that to have Revenue there must be taxes; that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant; that the intrinsic embarrassment inseperable from the selection

[50] The words "Cultivate industry and frugality, as auxiliaries to good morals and sources of private and public prosperity. Is there no room to regret that our propensity to expence exceeds our means for it? Is there not more luxury among us, and more diffusively, than suits the actual stage of our national progress? Whatever may be the apology for luxury in a country, mature in the arts which are its ministers, and the cause of national opulence. Can it promote the advantage of a young country, almost wholly agricultural, in the infancy of the arts, and certainly not in the maturity of wealth?" are crossed out. Washington has bracketed them in the margin, with the note "not sufficiently important."

[51] The word "little" is crossed out.

[52] The word "avoiding" is crossed out.

[53] The word "coincide" is crossed out.

of the proper objects (which is always a choice of difficulties) ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the Conduct of the Government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining Revenue which the public exigencies may at any time dictate.

Observe good faith and justice towds. all Nations.[54] Cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality enjoin this conduct; and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and, at no distant period, a great Nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a People always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt that in the course of time and things the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages wch. might be lost by a steady adherence to it? Can it be, that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a Nation with its virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human Nature. Alas! is it rendered impossible by its vices?

In the execution of such a plan nothing is more essential than that[55] permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular Nations and passionate attachments for others should be excluded; and that in place of them just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated. The Nation, which indulges towards another[56] an habitual hatred,[56] or an habitual fondness, is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one Nation against

[54] The words "and cultivate peace and harmony with all, for in Public, as well as in private transactions, I am persuaded that honesty will always be found to be the best policy." are crossed out.

[55] The word "rooted" is crossed out.

[56] The article "a" is crossed out.

another,[57] disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable, when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur. Hence frequent collisions, obstinate envenomed and bloody contests. The Nation, prompted by illwill and resentment sometimes impels to War the Government, contrary to[58] the best calculations of policy. The Government sometimes participates in the national propensity, and adopts through passion what reason would reject; at other times, it makes the animosity of the Nation subservient to projects of hostility instigated by pride, ambition and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, sometimes perhaps the Liberty, of Nations has been the victim.

So likewise, a passionate attachment of one Nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favourite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest, in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one[59] the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and Wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification: It leads also to concessions to the favourite Nation of priviledges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the Nation making the concessions;[60] by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained;[61] and by exciting jealousy, ill will, and a disposition to retaliate, in the parties from whom eql. priviledges are withheld: And it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favourite Nation) facility to betray, or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without

[57] The words "begets of course a similar sentiment in that other" are crossed out.
[58] The words "its own" are crossed out.
[59] The word "another" is crossed out.
[60] The figure "1st." is crossed out.
[61] The abbreviation "dly" is crossed out and the figure 2 converted into the ampersand.

odium, sometimes even with popularity; gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition corruption or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent Patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practice the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public Councils! Such an attachment of a small or weak, towards a great and powerful Nation, dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.

Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence, (I conjure you to believe me[62] fellow citizens) the jealousy of a free people ought to be[63] *constantly* awake; since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of Republican Government. But that jealousy to be useful must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defence against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation and excessive dislike of another, cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real Patriots, who may resist the intriegues of the favourite, are liable to become suspected and odious; while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people, to surrender their interests.

The Great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign Nations is in extending our commercial relations to have with them as little *political* connection as possible. So far as we have

[62]The words "my fr'ds" are crossed out.

[63]Washington first wrote the word "incessantly" and then crossed out "in" and erased the rest; he then converted it into the word "*constantly*."

already formed engagements let them be fulfilled, with[64] perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence therefore it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves, by[65] artificial[66] ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or[67] the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships, or enmities:

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one People, under an efficient government, the period is not far off, when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon[68] to be scrupulously respected; when[69] belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation;[70] when we may choose peace or war, as our interest guided by our justice shall Counsel.

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European Ambition, Rivalship, Interest, Humour or Caprice?

'Tis our true policy to steer clear of[71] permanent Alliances, with any portion of the foreign world. So far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it, for let me not be understood as

[64] The words "circumspection indeed, but with" are crossed out.
[65] The article "an" is crossed out.
[66] The word "connection" is crossed out.
[67] The word "in" is crossed out.
[68] The words "to observe" are crossed out.
[69] The words "neither of two" are crossed out.
[70] The words "to throw our weight into the opposite scale" are crossed out.
[71] The words "intimate connections" are crossed out.

capable of patronising infidility to[72] existing engagements[73] (I hold[74] the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy).[75] I repeat it therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But in my opinion, it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them.

Taking care always to keep ourselves, by suitable establishments, on a respectably defensive posture, we may safely trust to[76] temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

Harmony, liberal intercourse with all Nations, are recommended by policy, humanity and interest. But even our Commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand: neither seeking nor granting exclusive favours or preferences; consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and deversifying by gentle means the streams of Commerce, but forcing nothing; establishing with Powers so disposed; in order to give to trade a stable course, to define the rights of our Merchants, and to enable the Government to support them; conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate; constantly keeping in view, that 'tis folly in one Nation to look for disinterested favors[77] from another; that it must pay with a portion of its Independence for whatever it may accept under that character; that by such acceptance, it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favours and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than

[72] The prefix "pre" is crossed out.
[73] The word "for" is crossed out.
[74] The words "it to be true in public, as in private transactions," are crossed out.
[75] The words "those must" are crossed out.
[76] The word "occasional" is crossed out.
[77] The word "at" is crossed out.

to expect, or calculate upon real favours from Nation to Nation. 'Tis an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my Countrymen these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression, I could wish; that they will controul the usual current of the passions, or prevent our Nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the Destiny of Nations: But if I may even flatter myself, that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good; that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign Intriegue, to guard against the Impostures of pretended patriotism; this hope will be a full recompence for the solicitude for your welfare, by which they have been dictated.

How far in the discharge of my Official duties, I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public Records and other evidences of my conduct must Witness to You and to the world. To myself, the assurance of my own conscience is, that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

In relation to the still subsisting War in Europe, my Proclamation of the 22d. of April 1793 is the index to my Plan. Sanctioned by your approving voice and by that of Your Representatives in both Houses of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me; uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

After deliberate examination with the aid of the best lights I could obtain[78] I was well satisfied that our Country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take, and was bound in duty and interest, to take a Neutral position. Having taken

[78] The words "(and from men disagreeing in their impressions of the origin progress and nature of that war)" are crossed out.

it, I determined, as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it, with moderation, perseverence and firmness.[79]

The considerations, which respect the right to hold this conduct,[80] it is not necessary on this occasion to detail. I will only observe, that according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the Belligerent Powers has been virtually admitted by all.[81]

The duty of holding a Neutral conduct may be inferred, without any thing more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every Nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of Peace and amity towards other Nations.

The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me, a predominant motive has been to endeavour to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption, to that degree of strength and consistency, which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes.

Though in reviewing the incidents of my Administration, I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have

[79] The words "The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, some of them of a delicate nature would be improperly the subject of explanation of this occasion. I will barely observe that according to my understanding of the matter, that right so far from being denied by any of the Belegerent Powers, has been virtually admitted by all." are crossed out. A second attempt to express the same thought was also discarded by the device of wafering the slip of paper on which is recorded the version finally decided upon. The second discarded attempt reads: "The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, would be improperly the subject of particular discussion on this occasion. I will barely observe, that to me they appear warranted by well established principles of the Laws of Nations, as applicable to the nature of our alliance with France in connection with the circumstances of the War and the relative situations of the contracting parties."

[80] The words "some of them of a delicate nature, would be improperly the subject of explanation" are crossed out.

[81] This paragraph is bounded by a marginal brace, in which Washington has written "This is the first draught and it is questionable which of the two is to be preferred." This marginalia was, afterwards, crossed out.

committed many errors.[82] Whatever they may be I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate[83] the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my Country will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that after forty five years of my life dedicated to its Service, with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the Mansions of rest.[84]

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it, which is so natural to a Man, who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for[85] several Generations; I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat, in which I promise myself to realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow Citizens, the benign influence of good Laws under a free Government, the ever favourite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labours and dangers.[86]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, September 28, 1796.

Sir: Your letters of the 17th 20 and 20th instant have been received.

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[82] The words "I deprecate the evils to which they may tend, and" are crossed out.

[83] The word "them" is crossed out.

[84] The following words are here crossed out: "May I, without the charge of ostentation, add, that neither ambition nor interest has been the impelling cause of my actions; that I have never designedly misused any power confided to me, nor hesitated to use one, where I thought it could redound to your benefit? May I, without the appearance of affectation, say that the fortune with which I came into office is not bettered otherwise than by that improvement in the value of property, which the quick progress and uncommon prosperity of our country have produced? May I still further add, without breach of delicacy, that I shall retire without cause for a blush, with sentiment alien to the fervor of those vows for the happiness of his country so natural to a citizen who sees in it the native soil of his progenitors and himself for four generations." In a marginal brace, also crossed out, are the following words: "This paragraph may have the appearance of self distrust and mere vanity."

[85] The word "four" is crossed out.

[86] The original, in the New York Public Library (from a facsimile of which this text is printed), is dated by Washington September 19.

On September 19 Washington left Philadelphia for Mount Vernon.

Enclosed you have a Warrant on the Secy of the Treasury for two thousand dollars for Contingent purposes, agreeably to your request.

'Tis well to learn from Mr. Monroe's own pen that he trusted the French Councils relative to us were fixed, and that he should hear nothing more from the Directory on the subject he had frequently touched upon in his former letters. If his conjectures are right it will not be difficult to account for the cause.

It affords much satisfaction that Judge Benson [87] has accepted the office of third Commissioner for deciding on the true St. Croix.

As no fit character occurs to me to supply the place of Mr. Marsh [88] as District Attorney, I request that you will get what information you can on this head and transmit it to me.[89]

To THE JUSTICES OF THE COUNTY OF FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA

Mount Vernon, September 28, 1796.

Gentlemen: Having been named an Executor to the Will of the late Major George Augustine Washington of Fairfax County, decd. my avocations made it necessary for me to decline Acting in that Capacity and his Widow who was also named executrix, took upon her the Execution of the trust. Her decease makes it proper that some other person should be empower'd to settle and manage the business of the Estate of the late Major Washington, as the causes which first led me to decline the execution still exist. I therefore request you will

[87] Egbert Benson.

[88] Amos Marsh. He was United States attorney for the district of Vermont. Charles Marsh was nominated in his place Dec. 30, 1796, and confirmed by the Senate the same day.

[89] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

authorise Tobias Lear to act as Administrator to the Estate above mentioned. I am etc.[90]

*To WILLIAM AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON

Mount Vernon, September 28, 1796.

My dear Sir: Your letter of the 12th Inst. enclosing one for Mr. Phillips[91] of Andover, found me at this place yesterday, after having been to Philadelphia and back again.

Happening to have as many bank notes of the United States by me, as would exchange those of Alexandria wch. you enclosed to me I have done so; and by tomorrows Post from Alexandria they, and your letter to the above named Gentleman, will proceed.

Mrs. Washington unites with me in best wishes for you, and with sincere friendship, I am etc.[92]

*To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mount Vernon, October 5, 1796.

Gentlemen: The bad weather (rather rain) on Monday, prevented my sending to the Post Office as usual, that afternoon, of course it retarded your receipt of the enclosed request of the Trustees.

I will give the several matters contained in your letters of the first instant due consideration,[93] and inform you of the result as I pass through the City, on my return to Philadelphia, wch. I expect will be on, or about the 25th.

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[90] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[91] Samuel Phillips.

[92] From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach, of New York City.

[93] See Washington's letter to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, Oct. 21, 1796, *post*.

If this delay will involve inconveniences, let me be informed thereof, and I will endeavour to give it to you sooner. With great esteem etc.[94]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, October 10, 1796.

Sir: Your letter of the 5th instant with its enclosure, came to hand by friday's post.

The extracts therein produced both pleasure and pain: the former, at hearing that our citizens are at length released from their unfortunate confinement in Algiers, the latter, to find that others of them have fallen into a similar situation at Tunis, contrary to the truce, and to the arrangement made with Mr. Donaldson.[95]

'Tis difficult to understand precisely what the French government design relative to this Country, from the accounts given by Mr. Monroe.

The enclosed letter respecting a Judge for the District of Rhode Island, has just been received; and as it is the most eligible choice I see a prospect of making, a Commission may issue accordingly, appointing Benjamin Bourne[96] to that office; provided it is the same gentleman who represents that State in Congress; otherwise, not until further enquiry and consideration are had on the subject.

A short time before I left Philadelphia last, a character was brought forward and well recommended as Attorney for the District of Kentuckey,[97] and the appointment met my approbation; but whether a Commission issued in consequence of it, or

[94] From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

[95] Joseph Donaldson, jr. He was United States Consul for Tripoli and Tunis.

[96] Bourne was confirmed by the Senate Dec. 22, 1796.

[97] William Clarke. He was confirmed by the Senate Dec. 22, 1796.

not, my recollection does not serve me. His name I have forgot; but the letters of recommendation, from the attorney General of the U States and others, were, I think, put into your hands with my sentiments thereon.[98]

To THE INHABITANTS OF SHEPHERDS TOWN[99] AND ITS VICINITY

United States, October 12, 1796.

Gentlemen: With great sensibility I receive your polite and affectionate Address of the 6th. instant.

That Beneficent Providence, which, hitherto, has preserved us in Peace, and increased our prosperity, will not, I trust, withdraw its protecting hand; while we, on our part, endeavour to merit a continuance of its favors.

Equally persuaded am I, that no inconvenience will result from my retreat to the walks of private life. The good sense of my Countrymen will always discern, and can never be at a loss to choose, a fit character to administer the Executive Government of these United States.

If it has been my good fortune, through the course of my Civil and Military employment, to have met the approbation of my Countrymen, my wishes will be consummated; and I shall have found the only reward I ever had in view.

For the favorable sentiments you have expressed for me, and for your kind wishes, I sincerely thank you, and reciprocate with great cordiality my vows for your welfare.[1]

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[98] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

[99] Now in West Virginia.

[1] In the writing of George Washington Craik.

On October 12 Washington inclosed this reply to the Inhabitants of Sheperds Town in a brief letter to John Kearsley and Joseph Swearingen, the committee, who forwarded the address. The copy of this letter, also in the writing of Craik, is in the *Washington Papers.*

To WILLIAM DARKE

Mount Vernon, October 14, 1796.

Dear Sir: Through you I beg leave to transmit the enclosed answer to the Address which came under your cover to me, yesterday.[2]

As the printed copy announces it to be from "The Inhabitants of Berkeley County" without noticing, particularly, the Officers of Militia, I was at a loss in what manner to make my response; for if the printed part only should be published, it would be difficult to account for my introducing *them* in the Answer; and if the writing at the foot of the Address should appear, the omission of them would be as hard to account for. I have, therefore, sent two draughts; One to suit each case. The other to be destroyed. With great esteem etc.[3]

To THE OFFICERS OF MILITIA AND OTHER INHABITANTS OF THE COUNTY OF BERKELEY

United States, October 14, 1796.

Gentlemen: With a grateful heart I received your friendly and affectionate Address of the 30th Ultimo.

No Satisfaction in my retirement can exceed that, of meeting the esteem and affection of good men and lovers of our Country, in return for my endeavours to serve it.

The approbation of my fellow-Citizens, is the only reward I ever sought, for any services I could render. Next to the

[2]The address to Washington, from the inhabitants of Berkeley County, Va., is a printed broadside, dated Sept. 30, 1796, and bears the following manuscript note, signed "Wm. Darke," at its foot: "By the Unanimous Consent of all the Officers of the 55th. and 67th Regiment of the Berkeley Militia: ordered that General William Darke do sign the above address, for and in their behalf, and that he transmit the same to the *President* of the United States." This broadside is in the *Washington Papers*.

[3]In the writing of George Washington Craik.

continued prosperity, and happiness of these United States, it would be the highest gratification my mind is susceptible of; and if I have obtained yours, it will be a source of pleasing reflection while I remain among you.

For the benevolent Sentiments you have been pleased to express for me, I offer you my sincere thanks; and pray you to accept my best wishes for your welfare.[4]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, October 17, 1796.

Sir: Your letter of the 11th. instant was received by the last Post.

Expecting to be at the Seat of Government by the first of next Month (if my Drivers, who have been sick are able to proceed) I shall be concise in this letter.

My Sentiments relatively to the appointment of Mr. Benje. Bourne, to be District Judge for the State of Rhode Island, were communicated to you in my last, and it is with pleasure I find that the subsequent opinions from thence concur in the utility of the measure.

As I am unable to account for the conduct of the French Directory as it respects our Treaty with Great Britain and believe their ulterior measures depend upon circumstances which are not yet sufficiently developed I shall suspend giving any further sentiments on the subject until I sojourn. In the mean time I desire that in this, and every other case, (within your department) requiring any act of mine, may be in readiness for my decision, against my arrival in that City, as I shall be unwilling that any matters which can be dispatched previously, should

[4] In the writing of George Washington Craik.

interfere with my preparations for, or communications to Congress, at the ensuing Session.[5]

To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Mount Vernon, October 17, 1796.

Sir: By the last Mail I received three letters from you (with their several numerous enclosures) the first dated the 8th. and the other two the 10th. of this instant.

The enclosures are all returned under cover with this letter; and as I expect to be at the Seat of Government by the first of next Month (if the health of those who are to accompany me will permit it) I shall express no Sentiments either on your letters or those papers until then: but desire that you would, in the mean time, receive the whole of them, and make a summary of such things as shall be found necessary for me to act upon, against my arrival. Not only in the instances alluded to, but all others; that every thing which can be dispatched previously may not, by delay interfere with the business of the approaching Session of Congress. Matters of mere rotine, or Office decision, need never wait for any opinion of the President, or even be referred to him; as it serves to encrease (by the transcripts) your business, and to withdraw his attention from other concerns.[6]

To LANDON CARTER

Mount Vernon, October 17, 1796.

Sir: The letter with which you have favoured me, dated the 28th ult. came duly to hand.

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[5] In the writing of George Washington Craik. From a photostat of the original from *Miscellaneous Letters* in the Department of State, kindly furnished by Carlton Savage, historical director of that department.

[6] In the writing of George Washington Craik.

A few months more will put an end to my political existence and place me in the shades of Mount Vernon under my Vine and Fig Tree; where at all times I should be glad to see you.

It is true (as you have heard) that to be a cultivator of Land has been my favorite amusement; but it is equally true that I have made very little proficiency in acquiring knowledge either in the principles or practice of Husbandry. My employments through life, have been so diversified, my absences from home have been so frequent, and so long at a time, as to have prevented me from bestowing the attention, and from making the experiments which are necessary to establish facts in the Science of Agriculture. And now, though I may amuse myself in that way for the short time I may remain on this Theatre, it is too late in the day for *me* to commence a scientific course of experiments.

Your thoughts on the mode of cultivating Indian corn, appeared to me, to be founded in reason, and a judicious management of the Soil for different purposes, is as highly interesting to, as it has been neglected by, the People of this Country; to the consequent destruction of much valuable land.

How to restore it to its original fruitfulness; and to increase the means by Stercoraries etc.; to preserve it in that or an improving state; what rotation in crops is best adapted to soils, of different qualities, in order to keep our fields in health and vigour, and at the same time to derive *immediate* profit from them, are the great desiderata of the Husbandman.

It is what the People of the interior parts of our country must come to soon, or emigrate to the exterior parts of it for subsistence on more productive Soil.

Nothing has contributed, nor will any thing contribute more to effect these desirable purposes than the establishment of Agricultural Societies in this, as they have been in other countries:

that the community may derive advantages from the experiments and discoveries of the more intelligent communicator through such channels. Besides the numerous local Societies which are to be found in all parts of Great Britain and Ireland, a national one is now established under the auspices of the government of those countries; which will, I conceive, be found among the most useful and beneficial institutions in them, if it is prosecuted with as much assiduity as it has commenced, under Presidency of Sir Jno Sinclair.

I shall always feel myself obliged by your communicating any useful discovery in Agriculture; and for the favourable sentiments you have been pleased to express for me, I pray you to accept the thanks of Sir, Your etc.[7]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, October 19, 1796.

Sir: The letter from Mr. King to you, is herewith returned.

In your dispatches to him, he ought to be instructed to remonstrate in strong terms against those Arbitrary and oppressive Acts of the B: Ships of War and Privateers, of which we have so often complained to little effect; And to press for redress.

The moment for doing these is favorable: self respect, and justice to our Citizens (especially our Seamen) require, and demand it of the British Government.

And if that order, of the Directory of France should prove Authentic, or even upon the strong presumption that it is so, Mr. Pinckney ought to be particularly charged.

I am glad to learn by Colo. Humphreys's dispatches, that our Concerns with Algiers were in so good a train; and hope, the

[7] From the printed text in M. D. Conway's *George Washington and Mount Vernon*, Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4).

account of the releasement of the Captured Vessel by the Tunissians will be confirmed.[8]

To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mount Vernon, October 21, 1796.

Gentlemen: According to my promise, I have given the several matters contained in your letter of the first instant, the best consideration I am able.

The following is the result: subject however to alterations, if, upon fuller investigation, and the discussion I mean to have with you on these topicks on my way to Philadelphia, I should find cause therefor.

Had not those obstacles opposed themselves to it, which are enumerated by one of the Commissioners, I should, (for reasons, which are now unnecessary to assign) have given a decided preference to the Site which was first had in contemplation for a University in the Federal City; but as these obstacles appear to be insurmountable, the next best site for this purpose, in my opinion, is the square surrounded by numbers 21, 22, 34, 45, 60 a[nd] 63.[9] and I decide in favor of it accordingly.

Conceiving (if there be space sufficient to afford it) that a Botanical Garden would be a good appendage to the Institution of a University, part of this square might be applied to that purpose: If inadequate, and that Square designated in the Plan of Majr. L'Enfant for a Marine Hospital, is susceptible of *that* Institution, and a Botanical Garden also, ground *there* might be

[8] In the writing of George Washington Craik. From a photostat of the original from *Miscellaneous Letters* in the Department of State kindly furnished by Carlton Savage, historical director of that department.

[9] This would be the area between the mouth of Rock and Tiber Creeks, bounded by 26th Street on the west, E Street on the north, 22d Street on the east, and the river front on the south.

appropriated to this use. If neither will admit of it, I see no solid objection against commencing this Work within the President's square; it being previously understood that, it is not to be occupied, for this purpose, beyond a certain period; or until circumstances would enable, or induce the Public, to improve it into pleasure Walks, &ca. &ca.

Although I have no hesitation in giving it as my opinion, that all the Squares (except those of the Capitol and President's) designated for public purposes, are subject to such appropriations as will best accommodate its views, yet it is, and always has been my belief, that it would impair the confidence which ought to be had in the Public, to convert them to private uses, or to dispose of them (otherwise than temporarily) to individuals. The Plan which has been exhibited to, and dispersed through all parts of the World, give strong indications of a different design; and an innovation, in one instance, would lay the foundation for applications in many; and produce consequences which cannot be foreseen, nor perhaps easily remedied. My doubts [therefore] with respect to designating the Square on the Eastern Branch for a Marine Hospital, did not proceed from an idea that it might be converted, advantageously, into Saleable Lots; but from the utility of having an Hospital in the City at all. Finding however, that it is usual in other Countries to have them there, the practice, it is to be presumed, is founded in convenience; and as it might be difficult to procure a Site *without* the City, that would answer the purpose, I confirm the original idea of placing it where it is marked, in L'Enfant's plan.

I am disposed to believe, if foreign States are inclined to erect buildings for their Representatives near the United States, the Sites for these buildings had better be left to the choice of their respective Ministers: for besides the reasons which have been already adduced, against innovations, it is very questionable

whether ground as low as that in the Capitol Square, west of the building, would be their choice: to fix them there then might be the means of defeating the object altogether.

As the business of the Executive Officers will be chiefly, if not altogether with the President, Sites for their Offices ought to be convenient to his residence; but, as the identical spots can be better chosen on the ground with the plan of the City before one, than by the latter alone, I will postpone this decision until my arrival therein; as I shall also do other appropriations of public Squares, if it be necessary to take the matter up before my return to Philadelphia.

It might be well to amplify on those subjects which you conceive ought to be laid before Congress, or the national Council, and to suggest the mode which you may have contemplated as best for the purpose, against my arrival; which, probably, will be on Tuesday or Wednesday next. With great esteem etc.[10]

To WILLIAM PEARCE

Federal City, October 26, 1796.

Mr. Pearce: Cyrus was obliged to come on to this place, in order to take the horses back, which Mr. Frestal and Mr. La Fayette rode, which is the cause of his delay.

Mrs. Washington desires me to inform you that there was some Butter left in the Cellar, and some Beef in a Tub which (after supplying James) may be applied to any uses you think proper.

[10] The draft, in the writing of George Washington Craik, is in the *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress. The word in brackets is in the writing of Washington.

On October 25 Washington wrote to the Secretary of State(?), sending a letter from the sister of Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, to be forwarded to him. "I shall commence my journey for Philadelphia this afternoon; but business will detain me one day at least in the Federal City." This letter is in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Let my Study be cleaned out, and the Room afterwards locked up. Do not miss the opportunity of getting our Baggage, and James, round by the first Vessel to Philada., taking a Bill of Lading for the several parcels, and sending it in a letter, that we may know when we get them All.

When your family quit the house they are now in, and you remove to the Mansion, let Dinah and the other girl join the Mansion house people and Mrs. Washington may, afterwards chuse either for a Washer woman.

Have the Earth removed from the stone quarry where I showed you; that Mr. Blagden may be able to examine it when he calls there.

Let all the Saddles and Bridles that I have left at home be cleaned and locked up, or they will be hacked about, injured, and perhaps lost.

The Mules for my Carriage, the two Colts from the Chariot Mares, and the one from the Augusta Mare must be well kept and attended to, till I come home. I shall write you more fully as soon as I get to Philadelphia in the meanwhile I remain your friend &ca.[11]

*To ALEXANDER HAMILTON

(Private)

Philadelphia, November 2, 1796.

My dear Sir: On monday afternoon[12] I arrived in this City, and among the first things which presented themselves to my view, was Mr. Adets letter to the Secretary of State, published by his order, in the moment it was presented.[13]

[11] From the printed text in M. D. Conway's *George Washington and Mount Vernon*, Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4).

[12] Oct. 31, 1796.

[13] Adet's letter was dated Oct. 27, 1796. It informed the Secretary of State that the flag of the French republic would treat the flag of neutrals in the same manner as they shall suffer it to be treated by the English. Adet's letter is printed in *American State Papers, Foreign Relations*, I, p. 576.

The object in doing this is not difficult of solution; but whether the *publication* in the manner it appears, is by order of the Directory, or an act of his own, is yet to be learnt. If the first, he has executed a duty only; if the latter, he has exceeded it, and is himself responsible for the indignity offered to this Government by such publication, without allowing it time to reply, or to take its own mode of announcing the intentions of his country towards the Commerce of these United States.

In either case, should there be in your opinion, any difference in my reception and treatment of that Minister, in his visits at the public Rooms (I have not seen him yet, nor do not expect to do it before tuesday next), and what difference should be made if any?[14]

He complains in his letter, that he had received no answers to the remonstrances in former communications (the dates of which are given). The fact is, that one at least of those remonstrances, were accompanied by as indecent charges, and as offensive expressions as the letters of Genet were ever marked with; and besides, the same things on former occasions, had been replied to (as the Secretary of State informs me) over and over again.

That the letter which he has now given to the public will be answered, and (to a candid mind) I hope satisfactorily, is

[14] Hamilton's reply (November 4) reads that, after consulting John Jay, "the manner of noticing it, [Adet's published letter] in the first instance at least, ought to be *negative*, that is, by the *personal* conduct of the President towards the Minister. That the true rule on this point would be to receive the Minister at your levies with a *dignified reserve*, holding an *exact medium* between an *offensive coldness* and *cordiality*. The *point* is a nice one to be hit, but no one will know better how to do it than the President. . . . But whatever be the mode adopted it is certain that the reply will be one of the most delicate papers that has proceeded from our Government; in which it will require much care and nicety to steer between *sufficient* and too *much justification;* between *self respect* and the *provocation* of further insult or injury, and that will at the same time save a great political interest which this step of the French Government opens to us. . . . We must if possible avoid a rupture with France, who if not effectually checked will in the insolence of power become no less troublesome to us than to the rest of the world." Hamilton's letter bears Washington's indorsement and is in the *Hamilton Papers* in the Library of Congress. It was removed from the *Washington Papers* by John C. Hamilton.

certain; but ought it to be published *immediately*, or *not?* This question has two sides to it; both of which are important. If the answer does not accompany the letter, the antidote will not keep pace with the poison, and it may, and undoubtedly would be said, it is because the charges are just, and the consequences had been predicted. On the other hand, may not the dignity of the Government be committed by a Newspaper dispute with the Minister of a foreign Nation, and an apparent appeal to the People? and would it not be said also that we can bear *every thing* from one of the Belligerent Powers, but *nothing* from another of them? I could enlarge on this subject, but add nothing, I am certain, that your own reflections thereon will not furnish. Whether the answer is published now, or not, would it be proper do you conceive, at the ensuing Session, which will close the political Scene with me, to bring the French Affairs, since the controversy with Genet fully before Congress? In doing this it is to be noticed, that there is such a connexion between them and our transactions with Great Britain as to render either imperfect without the other; and so much of the latter as relates to the Treaty with that country has already been refused to that body: not because there was any thing contained therein that all the world might not have seen, but because it was claimed as a matter of right, and the compliance therewith would have established a dangerous precedent.

Since I wrote to you from Mount Vernon, on the eve of my departure from that place, and on my way hither, I received a letter from Sir John Sinclair, an extract of which I enclose you, on the subject of an Agricultural establishment. Though not such an enthusiast as he is, I am nevertheless deeply impressed with the benefits which would result from such an institution, and if you see no impropriety in the measure, I would leave it as a recommendatory one in the Speech at the opening of the

Session; which, probably, will be the last I shall ever address to that, or any other public body.

It must be obvious to every man, who considers the Agriculture of this country, (even in the best improved parts of it) and compares the produce of our lands with those of other countries, no ways superior to them in *natural fertility,* how miserably defective we are in the management of them; and that if we do not fall on a better mode of treating them, how ruinous it will prove to the landed interest. Ages will not produce a systematic change without public attention and encouragement; but a few years more of increased sterility will drive the Inhabitants of the Atlantic States Westwardly for support; whereas if they were taught how to improve the old, instead of going in pursuit of new and productive Soils, they would make those acres which now scarcely yield them any thing, turn out beneficial to themselves, to the Mechanics, by supplying them with the staff of life on much cheaper terms, to the Merchants, by encreasing their Commerce and exportation, and to the Community generally, by the influx of Wealth resulting therefrom.

In a word, it is in my estimation, a great national object, and if stated as fully as the occasion and circumstances will admit, I think it must appear so. But whatever may be the reception, or fate of the recommendation, I shall have discharged my duty in submitting it to the consideration of the Legislature.

As I have a very high opinion of Mr. Jay's judgment, candour, honor and discretion (tho' I am not in the habit of writing so freely to him as to you) it would be very pleasing to me if you would shew him this letter (although it is a hurried one, my time having been much occupied since my arrival by the heads of the Departments, and with the Papers which have been laid before me) and let me have, for consideration, your joint opinion on the several matters therein stated.

You will recollect that the conduct to be observed towards Mr. Adet must be decided on before tuesday next; that is, if he comes to the public room, whether he is to be received with the same cordiality as usual, or with coolness; and you will do me the justice to believe that in this instance, and every other, I wish it to be such as will promote the true policy and interest of the country, at the sametime that a proper respect for its dignity is preserved. My own feelings I put out of the question.

There is in the conduct of the French government relative to this business, an inconsistency, a duplicity, a delay, or a something else, which is unaccountable upon honorable ground. It appears that the order under which Mr. Adet has acted is dated in July (early) and yet Mr. Monroe has been led to believe (though much dissatisfaction he says has appeared) that no such order had, or would be, issued unless Great Britain set the example; and in a letter of August the 28th he writes Mr. King to that effect; as the latter officially informs the Secretary of State: But I am fatigued with this and other matters which croud upon me, and shall only add that I am Very Affectionately Yours.

PS. I find I have not time before the hour for closing the mail arrives, to take the promised extract from Sir John Sinclairs letter, I therefore send the original, with a request that it may soon be returned as I have given it no acknowledgment yet. the articles which he requests my acceptance of are not yet come to hand.[15]

*To ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Philadelphia, November 3, 1796.

My dear Sir: After my letter of yesterday was despatched to you, the draught of the answer to Mr. Adet was presented for

[15] From the *Hamilton Papers* in the Library of Congress.

my approbation, with the opinions of the Gentlemen about me, that it would be expedient to publish it, and without delay.

It appeared also, by information from the Secretary of State, that as far as public opinion had been expressed on the occasion, that this measure was looked to, and expected. These considerations, and a conviction, if the publication was to take place otherwise than through the medium of Congress, the sooner it happened the more likely it would be to obviate the bad impressions it was calculated to make on the public mind; induced an acquiescence on my part. I do not, nevertheless, think it free from those objections which I mentioned in my last; as it is not probable that the correspondence will end with the Secretarys letter.[16]

I give you the trouble of this note to account for the Publication which you will find in the Gazettes of this morning; and to rescue my conduct from the imputation of inconsistency.

There are other parts of my letter not involved in this determination, which await the opinions I have asked, and on which I should be glad to hear from you (and in the manner which has been required in preceeding letters) as soon as it is convenient.[17] I am etc.[18]

*MEMORANDUM

Philadelphia, November 5, 1796.

I shall communicate such directions as have occurred to me since I left Mount Vernon, and are necessary to be followed, in

[16] Pickering's answer to Adet is dated November 1, and is printed in *American State Papers, Foreign Relations,* 1, 578.

[17] Hamilton's reply (November 5) is in the *Hamilton Papers.* It was removed from the *Washington Papers* by John C. Hamilton. In it Hamilton states: "It is all important to us: first, if possible, to avoid rupture with France; secondly, if that cannot be, to evince to the People that there has been an unequivocal disposition to avoid it. . . . I am the more particular in these observations because I know that Mr. Pickering, who is a very worthy man, has nevertheless something warm and angular in his temper and will require a vigilant moderating eye."

[18] From the *Hamilton Papers* in the Library of Congress.

this way; that such of them as may not be executed, or executed in part only, by Mr. Pearce, may be consigned over and compleated, or attempted to be completed by his Successor, Mr. Anderson.

The Plan for the Crops of next year (as handed to me by Mr. Pearce) may be adopted: or if he should have a meeting with Mr. Anderson in time, and alterations should be proposed and agreed upon between them, I shall yield my consent thereto excepting as to the rotation at Dogue run, at which farm I am inclined to pursue the system mentioned in the plan for that place and hitherto to wit

The Plans of the several farms. The rotations which had been designed for each farm. And the Book of Reports, are all to be transferred to Mr. Anderson when he takes Possession together with the Book of Accts. for his information and genl. guidence.

All accounts, of every kind and nature whatsover, are to be settled; and all balances against me paid off before Mr. Pearce surrenders his trust; and if those which are in my favor are not received, they are to be reduced to specialties, and promissary notes taken for the payment thereof; at a time to be agreed upon, to be inserted therein. These are to be given to Mr. Anderson and a list of them sent to me. Unless this is done, and receipts taken *in full* He or myself, will be plagued with old claims for this, or that thing which would never have appear'd if Mr. Pearce was present to confront them.

All the Overseers and the Gardeners must therefore be finally settled with, up to the commencement of their new term, and charged with every thing they have had, over and above what they are entitled to by their several contracts, which express what that is, and which must be the guide in the settlements; as I am under no verbal engagements to any of them. and consequently want nothing referred to me for decision.

Mr. Alexr. Smith must be called upon, pointedly, for payment of his note, when due; and the money lodged in the Bank of Alexandria. It is on this fund you will, I presume, be obliged to draw to enable you to complete your payments; and it is from this source also, I must derive the means of providing necessaries for the house and family use; and for the various expences I shall be plunged into previous to, and on my resettlement (almost as a new beginner) when I arrive at Mount Vernon for my permanent residence. But admitting that I could afford to lay out of the money (which is not the case) it might not me prudent to avoid calling for it when due, as the endorser, if Smith's circumstances are ineligable, might attempt to avail himself of the neglect to exonerate himself from the payment.

It is my earnest wish that the Mill race may be completed This Autumn or Winter, not only because it is highly essential it should happen before droughts of next Summer, come on, but that I may have the Ditchers for other jobs, which I have in contemplation, as soon as possible after I get home.

For these reasons, and because there will be a good deal of work in preparing for, and tilling the ground at Mansion house, in Indian Corn next year together with other jobs at, and about that place, it is my desire that Sinah and Grace both, may join the house gang as soon as your family quit their present abode, and you yourself shall remove to Mount Vernon. Mr. Anderson may chuse other girls who will come within the description of his agreement.

I should be glad to have as much of the New road (which I laid out) done before you go as circumstances will admit, as you under stand my views in this business better than I could explain them to another without being on the spot. Let the line last staked out by Will receive double Stakes, to prevent mistakes;

and let the stakes be extended backwards, exactly on the same straight line till it strikes the River; and inform me whereabouts it does so. have your logs for the floor of the Causey (in the low parts thereof) each be at least eight inches in Diameter and smaller poles between them to level the Surface. let the Logs and the Poles both be cut 16 and 8 feet in length for the purpose of breaking the joints. I would also have the line that was staked out by Allison (as the Corn field fence runs) continued up to the road (at the double stakes) and all within cleared this winter in the manner the other part of the ground was cleared last year. I do not expect this can be done in time for Corn planting; and I know too, that it cannot be enclosed until the New Road is completed and in use; but if this should be accomplished by Midsummer it might be put in turnips, or anything else that would clean the ground against the next year, when it would be my wish to lay the whole down in small grain and grass.

Having given my sentiments with respect to the mode of thinning the Trees in the ground intended for Corn at the Mansion house, it would be unnecessary to say any thing further *to you* on the subject, if the execution could take place before your removal; but as this is not likely to happen, I must, for the government of Mr. Anderson repeat that no trees standing between the Visto's are to be cut down, or trimmed up; but that those on the right hand going from the house (on the left hand, if I recollect rightly, they are sufficiently thin already for the purpose of ornament, which is my first object) may be a good deal thinned by taking them up, invariably, by the Roots. Where the trees stand very thick, leave circular clumps (of from 30 to 50 yards across) without trimming the Trees. But all single trees should be trimmed to one regular height, and as high as can be reached by a Chissel on a long staff; that the

Corn may be less shaded in its growth. In leaving the clumps, if it can be done consistent with the thick growth of the Trees, pay attention to the look of them, in going to, or returning from the house.

There are so many things I wish to have done soon, and so many others that are essential to do, that I scarcely know what direction to give concerning them; but if the thinning of these trees in the manner here described could take place before you quit the concern it would please me, because you have had my ideas more fully explained to you on this subject than I should be able to give in writing, to Mr. Anderson. Another advantage would result from the thinning, as soon as the possible, this ground of the trees, and that is, that it may be immediately broke up by a number of strong Plows, and deep plowing, to enable it to produce better Corn next year.

All the ground within the inclosure adjoining to this (at Mansion house) that was not in Wheat this year (and which was proposed to have been sown in Rye but not done so) I would also have put in Corn next Season; The part that was in Wheat, may be sowed with Oats and grass-seeds in the Spring; or, if judged better, might lye uncultivated; or be fallowed, so as to come into Rye in the Autumn with *all* the Corn ground in other parts at that place; or the Spring following may be wholly sown with Oats. My object being, to lay the whole, of those two inclosures (which may both of them be thrown into one, and the Rails which now divide them applied to strengthen the outer fencing) into grass and Pasture, after all the under growth, sprouts from the Stumps, &ca. &ca., are quite destroyed.

As the lot which was in Oats and Clover at Mansion house last year, is badly taken with the latter crop, and the other lot in front of the house is pretty well set with that Article I leave it

to you, from their present appearance, to decide wch. of the two should come into Potatoes or Oats and Clover next year that it may be broke up *this* autumn accordingly.

When the Angle of Wood, adjoining the present Corn field at Mansion house is cleared let all the Poles which are of a proper size for a watled fence, either in whole, or by being split in two, be preserved; as my intention is, when I come home, to have a neat fence of that kind, on a ditch from the White gates along the road, to the turn of it, as Allisons stakes will run to the present fence.

When that lot by the Mill is cultivated, according to your plan, the ensuing year in Corn, let that part of it which lyes below the race in the lower meadow of the Mill Swamp, down to the ditch, or to the old bed of the run, be cultivated in Corn also, in order to cleanse and prepare it for grass. That part has been twice cleared and grubbed but for want of cultivation may be worse now than ever; wch. shews the bad policy of undertaking, at any time, more of anything than can be *compleatly* executed under almost any circumstances. It is very desirable also, if it were practicable, to do the same in the next meadow above, between the Race and present good mowing ground, quite up to the next partition fence. Having these foul spots in fields, whether they are intended for cultivation, or for grass, is not only a great eye sore, but in truth they are a real disadvantage; for they are constantly encroaching; spreading their Seeds; affording harbour for Vermin, and at length get so thick with briers, and other trash, as to make the clearing more difficult the longer it is delayed. Besides, in the present case, I think peculiar advantages to the Mill would be derived from clearing them up as the earth along side the race, by taking the growth of Shrubs &ca. from it and by tillage, would become more

consolidated, and not so liable[19] to those leaks which are a great diminution of the water at the Mill.

I would also have that part of the Mill Swamp, which by your plan is destined as additional Corn ground for Dogue run, perfectly cleared and tilled, where it has been cleared before; for my object with that Swamp is, to make it perfect as I move on, towards the head of it, at the Tumbling dam. If one lot or inclosure after another was completely cleared and cleaned, with trees left here and there for shade, it would have a beautiful appearance from the Mill Road; and whether for Hay or grazing it would be highly advantages, [*sic*] to let the lots succeed each other in Rotation.

Get the greatest quantities you can of Cedar Berries, before they are destroyed by Birds as I shall want them in profusion next year. If delayed too long you may be puzzled to do this, and next year the Trees may produce few, or none; which would throw me back two years.

Let the Lane from the Barn at Union Farm be completed on both sides with cedar plants as far as you have them, and then with the Berries afterwards (sowed sufficiently thick) after being prepared in the way formerly mentioned to you, that is, by rubbing, or getting off in some way or other all the pulp, or glutinous matter which encompasses the Seed. The Plants, I am persuaded, in order to ensure their living, ought to be taken up in winter with a block of frozen earth around the Roots; and if the Seed is sown, it ought to be in a bed of well prepared earth, in the line they are ultimately to remain, in the hedge rows.

I request that a lane may be made by Post and Rail fences from the outer gate going into Dogue Run farm, across the meadows to the next gate of the wedth, [*sic*] and in a line with

[19] The words "so liable" are inserted, and Washington failed to cross out the word "subject" which he wrote at first.

the fences from the last mentioned gate to the Barn. The outer gate may remain where it is, but the inner one may be removed to any place, where most wanted, this will not only divide the meadows but secure them better from trespassers.

All the hedges which were planted last Spring, or Autumn, should be made good at the proper Season; otherwise the labour and materials which have been applied that way, will have stood for nothing; as an imperfect hedge forms no inclosure, and would be little better than a nuisance. The ground should be well prepared for this purpose. In truth, it is idle to put either plants or Seeds in to it without; for there is no better chance of their succeeding without cultivation, (until they arrive to a certain strength to protect themselves) than there is to expect a crop of Corn from merely putting the Seed in the ground and giving it no attendance thereafter.

I would have the Corn gathered as soon as it can be with safety. 1st. to rescue it from the depredations of Squirrels and other animals that are devouring it; Secondly, to avoid the injury which the Wheat Sustains by Carts running over it after the ground begins to freeze, and get slippery on the top; and thirdly, because they will take heavier loads, and make more frequent trips before, than after the earth becomes soft and the Wheels sink into it either from Rain or frost.

Some years ago, I had brought from Point Comfort, or some other place on the Bay of Chesapeake, a quantity of fine white Sand for the purpose of Sanding my houses anew when circumstances would enable me to give them a fresh coat of Paint. As it is my intention to do this the ensuing Summer, I request you would inform me if the sand is there still, and what quantity there is of it. To the best of my recollection it was put into the Salt house, or into the Cellar at the North end of the Mansion house. Whether it is to be found now, or not, I wish you

would have a little of the whitest finest and softest of the free stone at the Wharf (not that which is rotten) pounded fine and run through a meal Sifter of middling finess, to see if it would not answer as well, or better than sand. If it would, a preference should be given to it on acct. of its being on the spot and easily reduced to a powder; whereas the white Sand from below is not always to be obtained, and one is imposed upon in the price. To ascertain the difference with certainty between the sand and pounded Stone take two pieces of Plank (plained, a foot square each will be sufficient) and paint them in the usual manner with white lead grd. in oil and after the first coat is dry give them a second (the paint a little thicker) and while it is fresh throw (the board standing perpendicular on one edge) sand against one, and pounded stone against the other, as long as they will stick, and till every part of the paint is well covered. You will then, when they are dry, be able to decide which will look best and most resemble stone; which, together with the preservation of the Wood, are the ends to be answered by this operation. Let me know the Result of the experiment as soon as it is made, that I may know what measures to take.

If it is not already done, delay no time in digging your Potatoes; when they are suffered to remain so long in the ground they rarely get sufficiently dry to keep well in bulk. Keep an exact account of what comes out of each lot, and the field at Dogue run, that the quantity of the latter, may be compared with the quantity of Corn from the same field.

Besides reserving an ample store of Potatoes for Seed (at all the Farms) next year, let there be a sufficiency of them, and Turnips also, laid by for the use of our Table, after we come home, in March next.

Take particular care that a great number of (what you conceive to be) the best kind of Turnips, is set out for Seed, among

these let there be many of the Sweedish, as that sort is in very high estimation on many accts.

Let particular care be taken of the India Hempseed, and as much good grd. allotted for its reception next year as it is competent to Sow.

As I am persuaded not a moment will be lost in grinding up my Wheat, I shall only add, on this head, that I would have the flour sold as fast as it is manufactured.

In a particular manner I request that the Ice house may be filled from the *first* Ice that forms, and be replenished afterwards as fast as it sinks, and there is Ice to do it with. Let the house be examined before hand repaired (if repairs are wantings) and everything had in the most perfect readiness to embrace the first opportunity without depending upon second. The disadvantage of not being able to keep fresh meat, last summer (though generally a cool one) ought to stimulate to the greatest exertions to provide against the next when we shall have more, and longer occasion for this mode of preserving it.

If it shall be found, on experiment, that the pounded Stone answers as well, as sand for coating the houses, Frank, Herculas and Cyrus may get a good deal of it pounded. They may get up a large quantity of gravel at the place I shewed you. They may, when Davis and Muclas have done the Brick work at River farm assist them in throwing up Brick earth at the place I pointed out for at least One hundred thousand Bricks. They may assist the Gardener in making good the Hedges about the Mansion house, getting Dung into the Garden, or in any thing else. In short let them be employed in any manner at, or near the M. House that will Keep them out of idleness and mischief.

The old white horse and the Iron Grey I would have kept in good order without being highly fed and this may happen as it is my desire they should not be used. The black and horse

called Smoaker, it is also my desire should be kept in order for the use of Mr. Anderson and not suffered to be hackneyed about. The four Mules set apart for my particular use, together with the two mule colts from the Coach mares and that one from the Augusta mare I desire Peter may be particularly charged to keep them in good order.

Such Sashes as are wanting in the Cupulo ought to be put in without a moments delay otherwise the weather driving in may do great damage to the house and occasion the Sealing of the rooms below to fall.

In order that your Porkers may be made fat, and killed before you leave Mount Vernon (both of which I desire may happen) let them be got up immediately and well fed (inform me of the number). Our call for this article will, I expect, be pretty heavy after we get home.

Before you quit the Concern, have an exact Inventary taken of all the Horses, Asses, Mules, Cattle, Sheep and Hogs (if the latter can be ascertained), together with the Carts, Plows, Harrows, Axes, Hoes Mattocks and *every* other impliment on the farms, and deliver one copy thereof to Mr. Anderson and send another to me. He, of course will note down what each farm has that he may know when any are missing. He will provide himself, from the Booksellers in Alexandria, with a new Ledger to enter all these things in and to commence his Accounts anew.

Endeavor to procure all the Oyster shells you can for me as I shall have occasion for a good deal of Lime next year.

*To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, November 7, 1796.

Gentlemen: Your two letters, dated the 31st. Ulto., with their several enclosures, were received on thursday last. The one to

Mr. Wolcott has been delivered to him; but he seems to have no sanguine expectation of obtaining a loan from the Bank of the United States, for the purposes of the Federal City. He intended to communicate your offer to the President and Directors on Saturday and to support it with an expression of his wishes that you might be accommodated. He promised to write to you himself, by this day's Post, but did not expect he should be able to give the result of his application at that time.

I gave him your letter for Messrs. Willink, to be forwarded to those Gentlemen, and shewed him the copy of it, as I had some doubt myself with respect to the offer of 7½ pr. Ct. *pr. annum*. His doubts of the eligibility of *this* offer, under the Act of Congress guaranteeing the Loan, being still greater than mine, I requested he would give the matter mature consideration, and inform you of the result, if in his judgment it was inadmissable under the Act. You will observe that the objection lyes to the words *pr. annum,* not because the cost and charges in obtaining the Loan may amount to this in the *first* instance. As Mr. Wolcott (if he is confirmed in this opinion) will write to you himself on this subject, I shall not enlarge. except to inform you that I shall detain the Letter until this point is decided.

My opinion always has been (since the first Sale to Greenleaf) and still is, oppos'd to large Sales of lots, except in the denier resort. I am more disposed therefore to try any other expedient to raise money in preference. If these fail, and it comes to the alternative of selling in the manner you propose, or suspending the operations altogether I shall have no hesitation in my choice of the first. I have no doubt of your being informed of the result of Mr. Wolcotts application *here,* by Wednesday's Mail (if he says nothing thereon today). If this fails, I will execute and forward the power authorising the

other application to the Legislature of Maryland, by the succeeding Post.

Enclosed is a statement handed to me by the Proprietors of the Hotel in the Federal City. I told the bearer (one of them) who brought it to me that I would, simply, transmit it. If your answer passes through me, to them, let it be distinct from other matters, and so framed as that the letter may be turned over to them, under a blank cover. With great Esteem etc.[20]

*To LANDON CARTER

Philadelphia, November 8, 1796.

Sir: The letter you have been so good as to favor me with, dated the 27th. Ulto. found me in this City immersed in papers, and preparing for the approaching Session, and busy Scenes with Congress. Let this be my apology then for doing little more, at present, than to give your letter, and its enclosure, an acknowledgment. A time will soon come, I hope, when I can do more; and be in a situation to profit from the relatns. you may give me of your further experiments. Permit me in the meanwhile, to ask your solution of the following questions being a warm frd. myself to green in preferance to naked fallows.

1st. Have you continued the alternate growth of Pease and Wheat, since the year 1794, in the field referred to in your printed letter of the 29th of January of that year?

2dly In that case what has been the product of your Crops in it since?

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[20] From *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

The letter sent, in the writing of George Washington Craik, is in *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

3dly. Has the field received any other aid than what you supposed it had derived from the leguminous crop and mode of cultivating it?

4th. If not, what is the present condition of the field? Is it improving, or otherwise?

5th Would the Pease have yielded as well on a stiff Loam, or clay, as on such light or Sandy land as you have described yours to be?

6th. Did you drop them by hand, or by means of a drill Plough?

7th. As there is a great variety in the tribe of Indian Pease, which kind of them have you cultivated? Some run, and extend their vines so far as soon to impede the operations of a Plough.

8th. Is there always a ready sale of them? and at what price?

9th. Could as many be bought *now*, or in the course of the ensuing *winter* as would sow, or plant, at the distances, and in the manner you recommend, a field of about 70 acres?

10th. At what period would you *choose* the Pease should be planted or Sown?

11th. In that case when would they be suffly. ripe to harvest? or, in other words, how long do they usually remain on the ground?

12th. By your sketch and the letter also it is not expressed whether more than one plowing is given after the Pease are planted, and there is a disagreemt. betwn. the two; the 1st. throwing the mould *to,* and the 2d. *from* the Pease. Is one Plowg. sufficient (especially if the season is moist) to prevent the ground from being foul with grass, and hard as well as with large weeds, thereby rendering it unfit for the reception of Wheat?

13th. What is meant in the 4th. paragraph of the sketch, by the words "about the time of its sunning"? and when does this Sunning happen?

14 As by the rotation wch. is here contemplated the fields may be always in Culture, what *propn.* of Pasture or graising grd. wd. you give to the Farm of any given size?

I will make no apology, Sir, for giving you the trouble of answering these queries. The Gazette containing your printed letter to the Agricultural Society in Culpeper, is returned; with my thanks to you for giving me the perusal of it. If the experiment, mentioned in the sketch, has been continued on the *same* field, as successfully as it appears to have been commenced, there can be no rotation more simple; no dressing (if it is efficient) so cheap; nor any profit from *field* cultivation greater if progressive as you conceive it to be. With much esteem etc.

*To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, November 11, 1796.

Gentlemen: Enclosed is the Act with my signature, requesting Thomas Beall of George, and John M. Gantt to reconvey to the Commissioners of the Federal City all the lands within the same which had been vested in them, in trust.[21]

Yesterday the Secretary of the Treasury shewed me the copy of the letter he had written to you on Monday last, as also of the one he had addressed to the President and Board of Directors relative to your application for a loan from the Bank of the United States.

[21] Copies of an order for the reconveyance of these lands, dated Oct. 3, 1796, and a similar order dated Nov. 10, 1796, are in *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

In consequence of the latter a Committee has been appointed to examine, and report their opinion on the said application: the result of which was unknown to him at that time. Until I am informed of this, I shall forbear to send the other Act, authorising the resort to the Legislature of the State of Maryland. With respect etc.[22]

*To ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Philadelphia, November 12, 1796.

My dear Sir: In due time, and in good order, I received your letters dated the 4th, 5th and 10th instt; and shall be mindful of their contents.

What construction do you put upon the information received through the assistant of D——r B——? and what notice, if any, should it meet with *now,* or hereafter, if application should be made for leave, or the event take place without?[23]

Having sometime since, called upon the different Secretaries for such matters (within their respective departments) as required to be communicated to Congress at the opening of the Session, the enclosed papers are from two of them; one has given a shape to the ideas. From the Treasury department I have received nothing yet; and presume nothing will come from the Secretary of it except such matters as are of the fiscal kind, founded upon facts and statements.

The Secretary of War has closed his notes, or draught, with a communication, a declaration, and an invocation, which I

[22] From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

[23] "I last evening saw Doctor Bayley our health Officer, who tells me, that the French Consul here in a conversation with an assistant of the Doctors, who is a refugee from St Domingo, expressed a desire to make arrangements for the sick of a French fleet expected shortly to arrive. I thought this circumstance worth communication."—*Hamilton to Washington,* Nov. 5, 1796. Hamilton's letter is in the *Hamilton Papers* in the Library of Congress.

had no intention of introducing, if such sentiments could be avoided with that decent respect wch. is due to such members of both houses as have been uniform and steady in their Support of those measures of government which I have thought the interest and welfare of this country required, and accordingly recommended.

The reasons which have operated a reluctance in my mind to touch on this subject at the *opening* of the Session, are two:

First, that it might not be supposed it was introduced for the purpose of a complimentary notice of the event, by those who might feel a disposition to offer it; and secondly, that it might not embarrass others, who had rather be silent; much less put it in the power of a third set, to oppose (if it should be attempted) sentiments of this sort, in the answer to the Speech.

These being my reasons: judge of their force. If they out weigh what may be considered as indifference, slight, or disrespectful in me, towards the body to whom the Address is made, let them prevail. If not, adopt in whole, or in part, or new model altogether to your liking, the sentiments, or expressions of Mr. McHenry.

Among the things noted in my Memorandums, and not to be found in the enclosures, is an intimation to this effect, viz, that from the best information I have been able to obtain, and from the best view I have of the general system of European Politics, and of the state of matters in the Mediterranean in particular, our Commerce in that quarter will always be upon a precarious establishment unless a protecting force is given to it. If Congress in their investigation of the subject should coincide in this opinion, it will rest with their wisdom to decide whether that trade, in particular, is of sufficient importance to countervail the expence of its protection. How much beyond this to extend the view towards a Navy, in the present uncertain state

of our Fiscal concerns, merits consideration. My own sentiments lead strongly to the means of Commencement.

This last article in addition to the several matters contained in the enclosures, and what will naturally flow from the texts mentioned in your letter, together with a general reference to the proper Officers for estimates, Papers, &ca., alluded to in the Speech will comprehend every thing that has occurred to me, as necessary to be mentioned at the *opening* of the Session; and I would thank you much for letting me have the whole as early in next week as your convenience will permit, at any rate on Saturday; with your opinion on the propriety of giving Congress a full statement relatively to the Situation of our affairs with France, as suggested in my letter of the —— instant. With Affectionate regard &c.

PS. I was in the very Act of closing this letter when yours of yesterday's date came to hand, due consideration shall be given to the Contents of it.[24]

*To JAMES ROSS

Philadelphia, November 12, 1796.

Dear Sir: A few months will put a period to my political existence, and a few days afterwards to my residence in this City; which I never expect to see again.

May I ask the favor of you therefore (if this letter should reach your hands in time, and opportunities should present themselves) to request, and even to press Colonels Shreve and Cannon, and Mr. Charles Morgan to settle and pay to you, before your departure for Congress, the balances respectively due

[24] From the *Hamilton Papers* in the Library of Congress, where Hamilton's letter of November 11 is filed. It deals with "the late Reply to Mr. Adet," and Hamilton's desire that peace be maintained, or if war comes that Washington's course be justified to the country.

from them, to me. Or, if the money cannot be obtained from all, or any of them, that I may at least know what is due to me, and what it is I have to expect from them before I leave this City; after which their communications with me would be circuitous, if not hazardous.

I have so often made apologies for the trouble I have given you in my Western concerns, that I will avoid doing it on this occasion, but if the above named Gentlemen would do as they ought, I could do more, and that is, to promise I will give you no further trouble in this business unless occasions should arise which may call for professional aid, and you would receive compensation for the Services rendered me. With very great esteem etc.[25]

*To FRANCIS DEAKINS

Philadelphia, November 13, 1796.

Dear Sir: Your favor of the 12th. Ulto. did not get to my hands until I had been arrived in this City, sometime, or it should have received an earlier acknowledgment.

It would have been pleasing to me, as much on acct. of the esteem I feel for you, as for the satisfaction of viewing my land with more accuracy, to have found you at home. As the case happened, I took only a hasty and superficial view of parts of the Tract.[26]

I am very much obliged to you, for the trouble you have taken to obtain a settlement with Mr. Jones for the Rents of the above Land: and as it is not in my way to do it, and besides, as I am entirely unacquainted with the circumstances attending the Tenants, in short as I know not what is due from either of them, or from Mr. Jones himself, it would render me a very

[25] From a photostat of the original in Princeton University.
[26] "Woodstock," in Maryland.

acceptable Service if you would be so obliging as to bring past transactions to a close; and advise me what had best be done in future, relatively to the Rents, the Tenants; and even the Land.[27] With very great esteem etc.

*To JOHN W. BRONAUGH

Philadelphia, November 13, 1796.

Sir: Your letter of the 24th. Ulto. did not get to my hands until after my arrival in this City.

I request you to be persuaded that I harbour no suspicion of unfair dealing from the repeated applications for your fathers Bond; but at the sametime that it is natural for you to be solicitous to possess it, it is equally proper that I should be perfectly satisfied that the Conditions of it have been complied with, before it is surrendered: and you will permit me to observe that, his Deed to Colonel Powell is no evidence of this, for the following reasons. 1. because it does not appear from hence, or anything else within my knowledge, that he has been requested by Colo. Muse to make this conveyance. 2 because after his sale of 2000 Acres to me, he still held 4000 in the said tract, to be disposed of as he should think proper; and 3. because there is no recital in the Deed to shew that either Muse or myself had any interest, or Agency in the Land; but on the contrary, that it has been sold for a valuable consideration, accruing to your father, and described as bounded by land belonging *to Colo. Muse.*

Let me repeat, and I do it sincerely, that I have no suspicion of intentional error in this business; but as no possible injury can result to *you* from the delay, in surrendering the Bond, but a very serious evil might accrue to *me,* by doing it, if Muse, with

[27] The management of these rentals was transferred from Jones to Hezekiah Veatch.

whom I exchanged the Land, has not had it conveyed to himself or to his order comformably to the views of the parties, it behooves me, on the score of prudence, to learn from the Representative of Colo. Muse (being told he is dead) whether by the conveyances which have taken place, I stand exonerated; or not. This may be known by an application to Mr. Battaile Muse; from whom, if I recollect right I received a letter a few years since On this very subject, although I am not able to charge my memory with the precise contents of it at this moment.

So soon as this is done I will give up the Bond, for if the conditions of it are complied with, it is no longer of any use to me, nor to any other person, that I can perceive. I am etc.

*To ALEXANDER SMITH[28]

Philadelphia, November 14, 1796.

Sir: Your letter of the 9th. has been duly received. When I authorised Mr. Pearce to sell my flour, I limitted him to the longest credit the circumstances of my own concerns would enable me to give, consistently with my own wants, and the arrangements I had contemplated. To extend the credit ninety days longer, would not only derange my own plans, but, as the same causes will always produce the same effects, at the end of ninety days, a further indulgence might be required.

It is from the produce of this flour that Mr. Pearce himself; all the Overseers; and a variety of other incidental expences, are to be paid. It is, and ever has been a rule with me, never to suffer a man to look for a just debt without receiving payment; and before I left home (repeating it since) in very strong terms, I have directed Mr. Pearce to settle with every one, and pay to the last farthing I owe; that there may be no after claims when

[28] Of Alexandria, Va.

he is gone, either upon his successor or myself. I mention these facts, and circumstances, to shew you how extremely inconvenient it will be for me, to comply with your request.

Nevertheless, being unwilling to distress any one, if it be possible to avoid it, I shall direct Mr. Pearce in the letter I am about to write to him, to day, to ascertain the aggregate sum required, to pay the demands upon him, on my account; and if you will give him the most unequivocal surety of paying it on, or before the 24th. of December (that he may have time between that and the first of January to clear himself out;) and will give unquestionably security also that the residue shall be paid on or before the first day of March, both sums carrying interest from the day they become due and are paid; that he may fix the matter with you agreeably thereto. I cannot forbear adding, however that the receipt of the whole sum, on the day it becomes due, would be infinitely more pleasing to me; but if this cannot be, you are to expect no favor from me in case of second disappointment. I am etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

*To THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

(Private)

Philadelphia, November 14, 1796.

Dear Sir: This letter is for your eye only. It is written for the purpose of expressing my regret for your continued absence from the Seat of Government. Rely upon it, it is productive of unpleasant remarks, in which I must be involved. It will, indeed is, considered as making a Sinecure of the Office. To suppose there is no particular occasion for the Law Officer of the government at the Seat of it during the recess of Congress is incorrect; many cases have presented themselves since the adjournment, requiring the opinion and advice of the Attorney General (besides other duties marked out by the Laws). Some

points have called for your aid since I have been here, and will occur without an hours previous notice in times like the present. Let me entreat you therefore to come on without delay, and to be assured of the esteem and friendship of Your Affect.

To WILLIAM PEARCE

Philadelphia, November 14, 1796.

Mr. Pearce: Your letter of the 6th was received (with the Reports) on Saturday; but I do not clearly understand by it, whether James Wilkes re-embarked with, or without a bed, or is yet at Mount Vernon. If the latter, he had better (if his health is sufficiently restored) offer himself to Mr. Law as A Coachman; for before he could get here, and be well settled, I shall be making my arrangements to return to Virginia; when I shall have no further occasion for hired Servants, unless to carry me there.

I am extremely sorry that Mr. Alexr Smith will not be able to take up his note when it becomes due. I wish that may be the worst of it, notwithstanding the Language he makes his Book of Accounts speak. However dangerous and inconvenient it is to me, to lye out of the money (for the reasons which were given to you in my last letter or Memorandum) I have informed him in a note of this date, that I should direct you to make an estimate of the several sums which were wanting to pay of[f] every farthing that is due from me, before you go (which is my earnest desire) and that if he will give you unequivocal *surety* of paying you the aggregate amount of them, on, or before the 24th day of December, I would (however inconvenient it was to me) wait until the first day of March next for the balance; Provided he would give indubitable *security* for the payment of both sums at the times above mentioned, with interest thereon, from the time his note becomes due.

You will perceive I lay a stress upon the goodness of the Security, and the surety of payments. I do it, because I know speculators (without meaning to apply the term to Mr. Smith, whose pursuits I am unacquainted with) may be men one day, and mice the next. If he is a responsible character he can find no difficulty in giving the security required. If he is not, the sooner I take effectual means to secure the debt, the less risk I run of loosing it.

I hope Richmond was made an example of, for the Robbery he committed on Wilkes Saddle bags I wish he may not have been put upon it by his father (although I never had any suspicion of the honesty of the latter) for the purpose perhaps of a journey together. This will make a watch, without its being suspected by, or intimated to them, necessary; nor wd I have these suspicions communicated to any other lest it should produce more harm than good.

The drought here, is also very severe. It is unlucky that I cannot get my Wheat ground into flour, on acct of the sale of it, and the fly also; but the latter, I hope, is not very bad, or you would have mentioned it, that I might decide whether to await the operation of the Mill, or sell the grain unground, if it should appear to be in much danger.

Did you get the Quarter at River farm removed without much difficulty, or injury? and is it now, or soon will be, comfortable to its inhabitants? Let that at Muddy-hole be made tight, if by patchwork only, as I am unwilling the people should suffer.

As I wish to have Venetian blinds for *all* the Windows in the West front of the Mansion house on the outside I request you will give me the dimensions of the window frames, above and below; and though Neal is not a competent judge of the manner of hanging them, or precisely where the hooks should be

drove, on which the venetian Shutters are to be hung yet understanding that these hooks are to go as far back as there is solid wood to drive them into (the shutters being double, and coming together as they do at the front or West door.) he cannot be much at a loss to give the width, and height, of those in the first and second stories; allowing them to cover as much of the frame on both sides, and at top, as the Mouldings will permit: into which the hooks, on which the shutters hang, might be drove, if there be solid wood to receive them (for this is all important, otherwise the hooks would get loose, and be a constant plague); the Shutters, or blinds would, in that case, go from moulding to moulding at the sides and at top. The shutters which are now to the lower Windows will be to be taken away altogether. as two sets cannot be on the outside; and there is no place for them within. I wish you well and am Your friend.

P. S. If Mr. Smith cannot give unquestionable Personal security and has real property (unincumbered and) adequate thereto, you had better have me secured that way, and in time. I pay but little regard to fair promises; as I know that distressing times are coming upon the Merchts for their Speculatn.[29]

*To WILLIAM AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON

Philadelphia, November 14, 1796.

My dear Sir: The letter which you put under cover to me, for Mr. Philips of Andover, was forwarded, and with its enclosure, safely received; as you will perceive by the Answers herewith sent.

Without any application, intimation, or the most remote thought or expectation of the kind, on my part; Sir Isaac Heard, Garter and principal King at Arms, wrote to me some years

[29] From the printed text in M. D. Conway's *George Washington and Mount Vernon*, Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4).

since enclosing our Armorial; and requesting a genealogical account of our progenitors since the first arrival of them in this country. I gave him the best information of which I was possessed; to wit: that John and Lawrence, two brothers, came over in, or about the year 1657. and traced our descent from John, who was the elder. He next wished to know the descendents of Lawrence from whom the Chotanck Washington's have proceeded. I wrote (to the best of my recollection) to Lawrence Washington for an Account of them, but have never received one, and of course could give none.

Lately, I have received another Letter from Sir Isaac Heard, of which the enclosed is a copy; and although I have not the least Solicitude to trace our Ancestry, yet as this Gentleman appears to interest himself in the research, common civility requires that he should obtain the aids he asks, if it is in our power to give it to him. Let me request of you, therefore, to give me what assistance you can to solve the queries propounded in his letter, if you have only *old* papers which have a tendency towards it: if not, or whether or not, by examining the Inscriptions on the Tombs at the Ancient Vault, and burying grd. of our Ancestors, which is on your Estate at Bridge-Creek. And if you are able to do it, trace the descendents of Lawrence Washington who came over with John, our Progenitor. With much truth, I am etc.[30]

To GEORGE WASHINGTON PARKE CUSTIS[31]

Philadelphia, November 15, 1796.

Dear Washington: Yesterday's mail brought me your letter of the 12th instant, and under cover of this letter you will

[30] From a photostat of the original in the possession of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union.

[31] Then at the College of New Jersey, afterwards Princeton University.

receive a ten-dollar bill, to purchase a gown, &c., if proper. But as the classes may be distinguished by a different insignia, I advise you not to provide these without first obtaining the approbation of your tutors; otherwise you may be distinguished more by folly, than by the dress.

It affords me pleasure to hear that you are agreeably fixed; and I receive still more from the assurance you give of attending closely to your studies. It is you yourself who is to derive immediate benefit from these. Your country may do it hereafter. The more knowledge you acquire, the greater will be the probability of your succeeding in both, and the greater will be your thirst for more.

I rejoice to hear you went through your examination with propriety, and have no doubt but that the president has placed you in the class which he conceived best adapted to the present state of your improvement. The more there are above you, the greater your exertions should be to ascend; but let your promotion result from your own application, and from intrinsic merit, not from the labors of others. The last would prove fallacious, and expose you to the reproach of the daw in borrowed feathers. This would be inexcusable in you, because there is no occasion for it; forasmuch, as you need nothing but the exertion of the talents you possess, with proper directions, to acquire all that is necessary; and the hours allotted for study, if properly improved, will enable you to do this. Although the confinement may feel irksome at first, the advantages resulting from it, to a reflecting mind, will soon overcome it.

Endeavor to conciliate the good will of *all* your fellow-students, rendering them every act of kindness in your power. Be particularly obliging and attentive to your chamber-mate, Mr. Forsyth; who, from the account I have of him, is an admirable young man, and strongly impressed with the importance of a

liberal and finished education. But above all, be obedient to your tutors, and in a particular manner respect the president of the seminary who is both learned and good.[32]

For any particular advantage you may derive from the attention and aid of Mr. Forsyth, I shall have a disposition to reward. One thing more and I will close this letter. Never let an indigent person ask, without receiving *something,* if you have the means; always recollecting in what light the widow's mite was viewed.

Your grandmother, sister, and all here are well, and feeling a strong interest in your welfare, join most cordially with me in every good wish for it. Affectionately, I am your sincere friend.[33]

*To TOBIAS LEAR

Philadelphia, November 16, 1796.

My dear Sir: I hardly know what apology to make for the positive manner, in which I declared the Certificate for the hundred shares in the Bank of Columbia, had never been in my hands. The fact is otherwise, and I delay no time to correct my error.

I found it last night, and account for it thus. Given to me, I suppose, (for I have not the most obscure recollection of the circumstance) at a time when my mind was occupied on, or immediately called to some other Object, I put it *loose* in my travelling Chaise-box, where Papers (frequently wanted at Mount Vernon) *always* remained; intending, I presume, to file it with the other certificates, in the *same* box; but not doing it then, and forgetting to do it afterwards, and every recollection of having seen it, it might have remained there 'till doomsday

[32] Samuel Stanhope Smith.

[33] The text is from that printed in Custis's *Recollections of Washington* (Philadelphia: 1861).

undiscovered, if I had not, for another purpose, examined every paper therein *seperately;* and by that means found the certificate which has puzzled both you and me, to know what had become of it.

Mr. Dandridge (as I presume he has informed you) applied, without encouragement, to the Revd. Mr. Medor of this City (one of the Moravian Clergy) for the Speedy admission of Maria[34] into the S[c]hool for young Ladies, at Bethlehem. Since then, I have written to the Principal of that School, The Revd. Mr. Venvleck,[35] but have not received his answer. When it comes I will forward it to you.

Mr. Smith of Alexandria, to whom my flour was sold, is craving, earnestly, a prolongation of payment, ninety days. This I do not like for two reasons, 1. because it carries long with it, distrust of his circumstances; and 2. because the doing of it, would be inconvenient, and a derangement of my own measures. I have however, not wanting to distress him, placed the matter upon the following ground. Pay Mr. Pearce the aggregate of his estimate of the Sums necessary to pay his own wages; the Overseers, and other incidental expences of the Estate, on or before the 24th. of next month, and I will wait until the first day of March next for the balance, provided he can, and will give indubitable surety that these shall be done.

As Mr. Pearce may not be well acquainted with business of this sort, or indeed with the adequacy of the Security which may be offered: Personal or Real, I have taken the liberty of mentioning the matter to you, praying, if you should go down to your farm, that you would aid him with your advice.

Washington Custis has got settled at Princeton College, and I think under favourable auspices, but the change from his former habits is so great and sudden; and his hours for study so

[34] Anna Maria, daughter of George Augustine Washington.
[35] Rev. Jacob Van Vleck.

much increased beyond what he has been accustomed to, that though he promises to be attentive, it is easy to be perceived he is not at all reconciled to it yet.

That of getting up an hour before day, to commence them, is, I will venture to pronounce not the least irksome to him, at present.

Offer my respects to Mrs. Lear, and love to the Children, in which Mrs. Washington unites. and be assured of the sincere esteem etc.

To WILLIAM PEARCE

Philadelphia, November 20, 1796.

Mr. Pearce: Your letter of the 13th inst, and the Reports of the preceeding week, were received yesterday. I am sorry to hear that the growing Wheat is suffering for want of Rain, but hope you had some on Tuesday last (three days subsequent to the date of your letter). If the fact however is otherwise, let the ground in which the Egyptian Wheat was deposited, be watered, and continued to be so until the Rains fall.

I have no doubt but that the Causey through the Swamp would prove a pretty heavy job to execute the work in the manner I proposed; but when so done, I shall have no plague with it thereafter; and the other part will be much less tedious and laborious. To form a judgment however of this matter, when the Causey is completed, work onwards towards the Mansion until you cross (or rather come to) the intended road leading from Muddy hole Barn. Working thus far as it will pass through as grubby ground as any there is in the whole road, you will be able to form a judgment of the time necessary for the completion of the whole; and besides, after this junction is formed, there can be no mistake afterwards. Let Davy know, and Mr. Anderson also, that where the Road turns on the top

of the Hill (South of the Causey) the fence is to turn also; and run with the road until it strikes the line of the other fence, in which the Gate stands; which fence is to be continued streight until the two meet, by the side of the Road.

I expected the line of the Road, when extended back to the River, would have struck it nearer to Hell hole, by several hundred yards, than where Cupids house stood. What sort of ground does it go over? and, if you can form a judgment from your present view of it, would the River, or vessels passing thereon be seen in travelling along it from the Causey to the White Gates?

I had no idea that Oznabrigs was scarce in Alexandria after the great Importations we had heard of; or that the price cd have been high. I will make enquiry into these matters here, and inform you of the result in my next; as I shall also do abt Paints and Oil; but when you spoke of White Lead ground in Oil being 24/. pr Keg, you ought to have mentioned what the Keg contained, as they are of various sizes from 25. to 100 lbs weight.

As Mr. Lear is very frequently at his farm, I wish you would consult him with respect to Mr. Alexr Smiths circumstances; and the best mode of having the sum he owes me, and the payments, according to my last to you, *perfectly* secured. I can run no risks in this matter; the sum is too large to be trifled with; and I am not one of those who place implicit confidence in strong assurances, or in outward appearances, unless they are corroborated by corresponding actions. You might, at the same time, advise with him on the prices of Oznabrigs, Paints, Oil, Nails &ca that I may decide in time whether to provide them here, or in that quarter.

I presume Mrs. Washington's Bed Chamber is the same pitch of the other rooms on that floor, but that I may be certain of it, I wish you would measure the height from the floor to the ceil-

ing, and inform me thereof. I request also that you wd let me know the *exact* width, and height (in front of the fire place) of the Chimney in the New dig. Room, that, if I should want to get a stopper (or chimney board) for it, as in some of the other rooms, I may be at no loss to fit one to it. And with respect to the Cellar windows at the South end of the Mansion house, I did not, in my former request, describe, clearly, what I wanted which was, to know how far it was from the top of the frame which is about the level of the brick pavement and projecting into it without, to the top, or within an inch of the top of the window frame. This, and not the whole size of the frame, I wish now to know. (Is the f 2–i 7½ width, and f 1–i 2 height of the Cellar windows in front, the dimensions of the frame from out to out of it, from in, to in? Are the Stone Cills, at bottom of these window frames, wider than the wood frames thereon? And how much?)

Order Peter to take good care of the three young (as well as the three covering) Jacks this Winter; and to feed them in such a manner as to keep them in very thriving order, that I may turn them to a good Account hereafter. I am etc.

P. S. Let me know the size of the blue Parlour, that is the length and breadth of it, and how far it is from the hearth on each side to the sides of the Room that the size of the hearth may be taken out, the Carpet as it now is with the [mutilated]. The dimensions of the 4 sides must be sent also.[36]

To ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Philadelphia, November 21, 1796.

My dear Sir: Having written to you on Saturday the 11th instant (accompanying it with enclosures) without hearing

[36] From the printed text in M. D. Conway's *George Washington and Mount Vernon*, Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4).

any thing from you in the course of last week, or by the Mail of this day, I begin to have uneasy sensations for the fate of my letter.

To this cause, and to my solicitude to have the Papers returned, you must ascribe the trouble of receiving this letter.

If my last got safe to your hands, and indisposition, business, or any other cause should have prevented your looking into the Papers; I wish, even under these circumstances, that they may be returned to me immediately; for I have no copies, and have but little time to digest, and to put the several matters therein contained into form, that the whole may be revised again and again, before it is presented. Among these Papers do not forget to place Sir John Sinclairs letter to me, as I am desirous of giving it an acknowledgment.

You will perceive by the publication of Mr. Adets letter to Colo. Pickering (in Claypools Gazette of this date) that the French Government are disposed to play a high game. If other proofs were wanting, the *time,* and *indelicate mode and stile,* of the present attack on the Executive, exhibited in this laboured performance, which is as unjust as it is voluminous, would leave no doubt as to the primary object it had in view; but what consequences it may ultimately produce, is not so accessible to human foresight, as it may depend upon various contingencies and events. I have not seen the writer since my return to the City, nor is it presumable I shall do it under present circumstances, unless courted on my part.

The letter of Mr. Adet having been committed to the keeping of Mr. Bache, by him. Extracts having already been given to the public, and other parts promised to be eked out, (as would, it is presumed, subserve the purposes in view) induced an opinion that it was best to give the *entire* letter to the Public from Authority, and without delay, that the well informed part of the Community might judge for themselves.

The necessity of bringing the matter fully before Congress is now rendered indispensible, and through that Medium it is presumed it will make its way to the Public with proper explanations. I am, as you know me to be, always and sincerely Your etc.

PS. Since, writing the above, your letter of the 19th. with its enclosures have been sent to me; accept my thanks for them. On account of the other matter contained in this letter I forward it, being written. Your sentimts. in this interesting crisis will always be thankfully received.[37]

*To JAMES LINN, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL, AND J. H. IMLAY, SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY OF NEW JERSEY

United States, November 21, 1796.

Gentlemen: I am truly sensible of the honor done me by the concurrent and unanimous resolutions of the Council and House of Assembly of the State of New Jersey, passed the 15th. and 16th. instant, approving my conduct in the Administration of the Government of the United States, and regret[ing][38] my determination to retire [from public life].[38] They have also been pleased to express their acknowledgments for the sentiments contained in my late Address to my fellow citizens, which affection, respect, and solicitude for their lasting welfare prompted me to lay before them.

Such testimonies, while they manifest the kindness of the Council and Assembly, persuade me to believe that my services have been useful to my country; a consideration which will render their recollection dear to me, to the latest period of my life.

[37] From the *Hamilton Papers* in the Library of Congress.
[38] The words in brackets are in the writing of George Washington Craik.

*To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, November 21, 1796.

Gentlemen: Your letter of the 11th. Instant has been duly received. The altered One to Messrs. Wilhem, and Jan Willink has been forwarded to its address, and the former is herewith returned.

Your application to the Bank of the United States for the loan of money, having failed (as I presume the Secretary of the Treasury has informed you, and as I have always supposed would be the case) I have executed the Power which was sent to me authorising a similar application to the Legislature of Maryland. and hope, if made, that it will be attended with better success.[39] I advise the retention of it however, a few days, until you hear from Mr. Wolcott the result of his soundings of a Mr. Hope (of the House of Hope, late of Amsterdam) who is just arrived in this City; and of whom it is *supposed* money might be obtained. With great esteem etc.[40]

*To JUDITH SARGENT STEVENS MURRAY[41]

Philadelphia, November 24, 1796.

Madam: The letter with which you were pleased to honor me, dated the 5th. instant, came duly to hand; and is entitled to my grateful acknowledgements for the favourable sentiments your partiality has led you to express for me; and for the services I have endeavoured to render our common country.

[39] A copy of the authority to borrow $150,000 from the State of Maryland, dated Nov. 21, 1796, is in *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

[40] From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

[41] She calls herself, in her letter of November 5, "the sister of Colonel Sargent."

I wish both were more deserving of the eulogium you have bestowed thereon.

Mrs. Washington adds her name to mine as a subscriber to your works, and with Miss Custis (who is with us) unites in best wishes for the success of it, and for your personal happiness, with Madam Your etc.

PS. Enclosed is a five Dollar Bank note on acct. of the subscription.[42]

To WILLIAM PEARCE

Philadelphia, November 27, 1796.

Mr. Pearce: Your letter of the 17th under cover from Mr. Lear came duly to hand, as did the Weekly reports of the 19th yesterday.

I am disposed to let Mr. Smiths debt stand upon the security you have placed it, unless before the 24th of next month any circumstances should occur to render other measures necessary, or, on that day he should be unprepared to make payment and require further indulgence. In either of these cases, it is my desire that you will consult with Mr. Lear and pursue effectual measures by requiring additional personal, or real Security, or both, to place my debt out of danger.

As you mentioned nothing relative to the Farms in your last letter I have nothing to add in this but to request information, and answers to the queries contained in my last letters, and a wish, to know how the Winter grain and Vetches look; and How your Wheat and Corn is likely to yield. I am Your friend.

P. S. In one of your letters, you mentioned, that you had recovered eleven dollars of Jas Kirks money, but do not say

[42] The subscription was, probably, for *The Gleaner,* which was published in Boston in February, 1798.

whether it was returned to him or not. If it was not, give me credit for it, as he will be paid here.[43]

*To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, November 27, 1796.

Gentlemen: Your letter of the 21st instant. with its enclosures, came duly to hand; previous to which, I had dispatched the Power, authorising an application to the Legislature of Maryland, for the loan of money; accompanying it, however, with a request that, it might not be carried into operation until you should have learnt the result of an application contemplated to be made by the Secretary of the Treasury to a Mr. Hope of Amsterdam. This application has been made; the result was to be known today; and by the Mail of tomorrow you are to be informed thereof, So says Mr. Wolcott to me.

The Memorial, relative to the Establishment of a University in the Federal City, I shall retain until the meeting of Congress, and then dispose of it as circumstances may dictate.[44]

The dissensions, and controversies which so frequently happen in that City, are extremely to be regretted; and nothing, I am persuaded, will contribute more to appease them, and to remove the jealousies which, without, will forever exist, than the residence of the Commissioners within the City; for which reason I do, in behalf of the public, give it as my decided opinion that they ought, and as my expectation that they will, remove into it, before the building operations of the ensuing year commences. It would, I conceive, be submitting to a novel

[43] From the printed text in M. D. Conway's *George Washington and Mount Vernon*, Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4).

[44] This memorial from the Commissioners of the District of Columbia was submitted to Congress December 12 by James Madison.

doctrine, to have the Commissioners of *any* City non-residents thereof. How much greater then must it be in one, where there are such a variety of objects to attend to? and such incessant calls upon their activity?

I am persuaded, that upon due consideration of the decisive opinion (only the repetition of a former one) now given, you will equally with others, see the propriety of enforcing it, as well for the purpose of answering the public expectation, and causing jealousies to subside, as from the intrinsic benefits which must result from the measure, in many points of view.

Mr. Walkers[45] attack; appears to me to be as impolitic, as it is indecent and intemperate; but as the issue of Indictments (as far as my observations have gone) has not often answered the ends of the prosecution, I thought it expedient to require the opinion of the Attorney General of the United States on the question you propounded to me; enclosed is the copy of it. Having done so, I submit the course to be pursued to your own judgments. To prosecute in *this* City, if Mr. Walker has become a Resident of it, would, I presume, be duly considered before it is undertaken. With very great esteem etc.[46]

*To JOHN SMITH, WILLIAM McGUIRE, CHARLES THRUSTON, ROBERT WHITE, JUNIOR, AND HUGH HOLMES[47]

United States, November 28, 1796.

Gentlemen: The approbation of my public conduct, which you have been so good as to express in behalf of the People of your country, has not failed to excite the most agreeable

[45] George Walker. He was a Philadelphia merchant who speculated in land purchases in the city of Washington.

[46] From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

[47] The committee of Frederick County, Va.

Sensations, and you have made it the dearer, by the terms of personal affection with which it is accompanied.[48]

At all times it has been my endeavour to discern and promote the welfare of our country to the utmost of my abilities; and if in critical situations events have been finally propitious, the success is to be attributed to the unceasing support of my fellow citizens, who have known how to maintain a Government made by, and for themselves.

In the retirement, so much desired, when I shall once more return to the occupations of private life, it will be a never failing source of my happiness to recollect, the various instances in which my honest exertions to discharge the duties of public office have been more than rewarded by the benevolence of my fellow-citizens.

To you Gentlemen, and the people of Frederick county, I most gratefully acknowledge this evidence of attachment:[49] and long, under the blessings of a benign Providence, may we all live to see our common country which we equally love, happy in the enjoyment of its present tranquillity, liberty and Independence.

To GEORGE WASHINGTON PARKE CUSTIS

Philadelphia, November 28, 1796.

Dear Washington: In a few hasty lines, covering your sister's letter and a comb, on Saturday last, I promised to write more fully to you by the post of this day. I am now in the act of performing that promise.

The assurances you give me of applying diligently to your studies, and fulfilling those obligations which are enjoined by

[48] The letter of the committee, dated November 12, is in the *Washington Papers*.

[49] The Frederick County address was in the form of a printed broadside and dated Sept. 30, 1796. Five of them are in the *Washington Papers*, each bearing many manuscript signatures of the various inhabitants. Its copy in the "Letter Book" bears the notation "Signed by upwards of three hundred persons."

your Creator and due to his creatures, are highly pleasing and satisfactory to me. I rejoice in it on two accounts; first, as it is the sure means of laying the foundation of your own happiness, and rendering you, if it should please God to spare your life, a useful member of society hereafter; and secondly, that I may, if I live to enjoy the pleasure, reflect that I have been, in some degree, instrumental in effecting these purposes.

You are now extending into that stage of life when good or bad habits are formed. When the mind will be turned to things useful and praiseworthy, or to dissipation and vice. Fix on whichever it may, it will stick by you; for you know it has been said, and truly, "that as the twig is bent so it will grow." This, in a strong point of view, shows the propriety of letting your inexperience be directed by maturer advice, and in placing guard upon the avenues which lead to idleness and vice. The latter will approach like a thief, working upon your passions; encouraged, perhaps, by bad examples; the propensity to which will increase in proportion to the practice of it and your yielding. This admonition proceeds from the purest affection for you; but I do not mean by it, that you are to become a stoic, or to deprive yourself in the intervals of study of any recreations or manly exercise which reason approves.

'T is well to be on good terms with all your fellow-students, and I am pleased to hear you are so, but while a courteous behavior is due to all, select the most deserving only for your friendships, and before this becomes intimate, weigh their dispositions and character *well*. True friendship is a plant of slow growth; to be sincere, there must be a congeniality of temper and pursuits. Virtue and vice can not be allied; nor can idleness and industry; of course, if you resolve to adhere to the two former of these extremes, an intimacy with those who incline to the latter of them, would be extremely embarrassing to you; it would be a stumbling block in your way; and act like a

millstone hung to your neck, for it is the nature of idleness and vice to obtain as many votaries as they can.

I would guard you, too, against imbibing hasty and unfavorable impressions of any one. Let your judgment always balance well before you decide; and even then, where there is no occasion for expressing an opinion, it is best to be silent, for there is nothing more certain than that it is at all times more easy to make enemies than friends. And besides, to speak evil of any one, unless there is unequivocal proofs of their deserving it, is an injury for which there is no adequate reparation. For, as Shakespeare says "He that robs me of my good name enriches not himself, but renders me poor indeed," or words to that effect. Keep in mind that scarcely any change would be agreeable to you at *first* from the sudden transition, and from never having been accustomed to shift or rough it. And, moreover, that if you meet with collegiate fare, it will be unmanly to complain. My paper reminds me it is time to conclude. Affectionately, &c.

P. S. I presume you received my letter covering a ten-dollar bill to pay for your gown, although it is not mentioned. To acknowledge the receipt of letters is always proper, to remove doubts of their miscarriage.[50]

* To JOSEPH WHIPPLE[51]

Philadelphia, November 28, 1796.

Sir: Upon my return to this City, the latter end of October, after an absence of some weeks at Mount Vernon, Mr. Wolcott presented me with your letter of the 4th. of that month.

[50] From the printed text in Custis's *Recollections of Washington* (Philadelphia: 1861).

[51] United States Collector of Customs, Portsmouth, N. H.

I regret that the attempt you made to restore the Girl (Oney Judge as she called herself while with us, and who, without the least provocation absconded from her Mistress) should have been attended with so little Success. To enter into such a compromise with *her,* as she suggested to *you,* is totally inadmissable, for reasons that must strike at first view: for however well disposed I might be to a gradual abolition, or even to an entire emancipation of that description of People (if the latter was in itself practicable at this moment) it would neither be politic or just to reward *unfaithfulness* with a premature preference; and thereby discontent before hand the minds of all her fellow-servants who by their steady attachments are far more deserving than herself of favor.

I was apprehensive (and so informed Mr. Wolcott) that if she had any previous notice more than could be avoided of an attempt to send her back, that she would contrive to elude it; for whatever she may have asserted to the contrary, there is no doubt in this family of her having been seduced, and enticed off by a Frenchman, who was either really, or pretendedly deranged, and under that guise, used to frequent the family; and has never been seen here since [the] girl decamped. We have indeed, lately been informed thro' other channels that she went to Portsmouth with a Frenchman, who getting tired of her, as is presumed, left her; and that she had betaken herself to the needle, the use of which she well understood, for a livelihood.

About the epoch I have mentioned she herself was very desirous of returning to Virginia; for when Captn. Prescot was on the point of sailing from Portsmouth for the Federal City with his family, she offered herself to his lady as a waiter, told her she had lived with Mrs. Washington (without entering into particulars), and that she was desirous of getting back to her

native place and friends. Mrs. Prescot either from not wanting a Maid Servant, or presuming that she might have been discarded for improper conduct, declined (unlucky for Mrs. Washington) taking her.

If she will return to her former service without obliging me to use compulsory means to effect it her late conduct will be forgiven by her Mistress, and she will meet with the same treatment from me that all the rest of her family (which is a very numerous one) shall receive. If she will not you would oblige me, by resorting to such measures as are proper to put her on board a Vessel bound either to Alexandria or the Federal City. Directed in either case, to my Manager at Mount Vernon; by the door of which the Vessel must pass, or to the care of Mr. Lear at the last mentioned place, if the Vessel should not stop before it arrives at that Port.

I do not mean however, by this request, that such violent measures should be used as would excite a mob or riot, which might be the case if she has adherents. or even uneasy Sensations in the Minds of well disposed Citizens; rather than either of these should happen I would forego her Services altogether, and the example also which is of infinite more importance. The less is said beforehand, and the more celerity is used in the act of shipping her when an opportunity presents, the better chance Mrs. Washington (who is desirous of receiving her again) will have to be gratified.

We had vastly rather she should be sent to Virginia than brought to this place, as our stay here will be but short; and as it is not unlikely that she may, from the circumstances I have mentioned, be in a state of pregnancy. I should be glad to hear from you on this subject and am Sir etc.[52]

[52] From a photostat of the draft in the Boston Public Library.

To THE CHIEFS AND WARRIORS, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE WYANDOTS, DELAWARES, SHAWANOES, OTTAWAS, CHIPPEWAS, POTAWATIMES, MIAMIS, EEL RIVER, WEEAS, KICKAPOOS, PIANKASHAWS, AND KASKASKIAS

[Philadelphia, November 29, 1796.]

[My Children]: I have heard and considered what you have said to me through the Secretary of War, and I am pleased to see you at the Seat of Government, and to receive you as friends.

You have asked for my advice, and I will give it to you freely, upon such matters as appear to me to be essential to your welfare.

In the treaty,[53] which you have entered into with my Great Warrior, General Wayne, and which has been ratified by the Senate of the United States, you have made certain Grants and promised certain things, that I make no doubt, you will comply with. On the other hand, the United States have promised, in the same treaty, certain things to you, which they mean to perform.

The United States, who love justice, have agreed to pay to you and your Children for ever, a yearly Sum of money in Goods, for a certain parcel of your land. By the same Treaty, the Indian Nations mentioned therein, have bound themselves not to sell any of their land, except to the United States. This is a wise part of the Treaty, inasmuch as it prevents your people from being cheated out of large Tracts of their Country by designing Men, who would not pay them what the land was worth; whilst what they might receive for it, could be of no use to their posterity. This is not the case when the United

[53] Of Greenville, Aug. 3, 1795.

States buy your land. They are careful that the Children of those who sold it, shall reap as much advantage from the Sale, as their Fathers did. Thus the treaty secures to each Indian Nation, their land against purchase by Individuals, whilst the laws of the United States, have in addition to that treaty, provided a punishment for persons who shall attempt to buy it, contrary thereto.

Let your Nations therefore pay a due respect and attention to this part of the treaty, and they will have nothing to apprehend for their land.

It may be proper to say something to you relative to the distribution of the Goods agreed to be paid to you annually, for the land ceded by the Treaty. It is right that the Quota, apportioned to each Nation, should be delivered to such persons only as the Nation may appoint to receive it. To prevent frauds therefore and ensure a fair distribution among yourselves, it is recommended, that each Nation, should fix every year upon the persons, whom it wishes should receive its Quota, and that they should instruct their Interpreter to inform the Agent, who is to deliver the Goods, of the names of the persons so chosen.

I shall now give you some advice respecting the conduct of your people, the observance of which, I consider of importance to their tranquillity and peace. There are among the Indians as among the Whites, Individuals who will steal their Neighbour's property, when they find the opportunity, in preference to acquiring property to themselves by honest means. Bad White Men for example, will go into the Indian Country, and steal Horses; and bad Indians in like manner will go into the Settlement of the Whites, and steal their horses. If the Indian Nations wish to deserve the friendship of the United States, and to prevent the white Settlers on the frontiers from retaliation on their property, the Chiefs and Warriors of the respective

Nations must use their endeavours to punish such Offenders, and restore to the Whites, or to some Officers of the United States, the property they may have stolen. As for the Government, it will use it's utmost endeavours to restore to every Indian any property of his which may have been stolen by Citizens of the United States, and will moreover punish those who violate the laws that have been made to prevent such practices, whenever the fact can be proved upon them.

But, it is not enough that the United States should furnish your Nations with an annual quantity of Goods that you should not sell your lands for that which could be of no advantage to your posterity, that you should prevent bad Indians from stealing from the white frontier people; and that you should live in friendship with the United States. More than all this is required to render your Condition comfortable. Your lands are good. Upon these you may raise horses and large Flocks of Cattle, by the sale of which you may procure the conveniencies and necessaries of life in greater abundance, and with less trouble than you do at present. You may also, by a little more industry raise more Corn and other Grain, as well for your families, as for the support of your Stock in winter. I hope the Nations will maturely reflect upon this subject, and adopt what cannot fail to make them happier. When the Government shall be informed that they have taken this wise course, and are sincerely desirous to be aided in it, they may rely upon receiving all necessary assistance.

In order that my [Children][54] of the different Nations should be informed of this advice, I request that you will explain to them what you have heard me say. I shall also, to the end that it may remain among them, and not be forgotten by their Children, request my beloved Secretary of War to send a Copy of

[54] Washington crossed out the word "Brothers."

this Talk to each Nation to be explained to them by their respective Interpreters.

Should you have any thing particular to say before you leave the Seat of Government, you will address it to the Secretary of War, who is instructed by me upon all matters relative to the Indian Nations, and who will furnish such of you as have acquired the title of Chiefs or Warriors with a Testimonial of the same import as that delivered up by Blue Jacket as a proof of my Esteem and friendship.

I now sincerely wish you a good Journey and hope you may find your [families and] Brothers well on your Return, and that [the Great Spirit above][55] may long preserve your Nations in peace with each other and with the United States.[56]

*MEMORANDUMS FOR WILLIAM PEARCE[57]

[November, 1796.]

Get a Scythe and cradle from the Eastern Shore of Mr. Pearce, by wch. to make others for catching the Grain, as cut, in the hand.

See the Letters to Mr. Christopher and Mr. Jno. Cowper dated the 4th. of Septr. 1794. for Informn. respg. the payment for Norfleets Land.

Also the Letter to Mr. Jno. Lewis on the same subject on whom a call is to be made for settlem. 8th Sep 1794.

A Letter to the Honble. Jas. Ross dated 13th. Sepr. 1794 acknowledges the rect. of £267 on acct. of Colo. Cannons Bond

[55] Washington crossed out the word "God."

[56] In the writing of a clerk in the War Department. The words in brackets have been inserted by Washington.

John Adams, writing to Mrs. Adams, Dec. 4, 1796, mentions that "The President dined four sets of Indians on four several days last week." This would be the week of Monday, November 28. In the *Washington Papers,* undated, but filed at the end of November, 1796, is a memorandum, in the writing of a clerk, giving the names of the chiefs and their tribes, with 5 pencil notations in the writing of Washington.

[57] See Washington's letter to William Pearce, Dec. 11, 1796, *post.*

In a letter to Mr. Lear of the 22d. Decr. 1794 some old Papers relative to the River Potomack, ask for them.

Colo. John Cannon in a letter written to him the 27th June 1795 is directed to deliver to Mr. Ross, the surveys of all my lands, and entreated to make a final settlement of matters with Mr. Chas. Morgan

Mr. Chas. Morgan in a letter written to him 28th June 1795 Is requested to press Colo. Cannon for this settlement and to tell the Tenants that delivering Wheat at *his* Mill will not exonerate them from paymt. of their Rents

Wrote on the 14th. of Novr. 1796 to my Nephew Colo. W. A. Washington for the Genealogical descent from L. Washington and the Inscriptions on the Tombs at Bridge Creek without havg. recd. any Answer, to send to Sir I. Hd.[58] [H. L.]

*To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, December 1, 1796.

Gentlemen: Your letter of the 25th Ulto came to hand on tuesday last, but it was not in my power to give it an earlier acknowledgment: and now, I must do it without resorting to papers (to be perfectly correct). The pressure of my business with the different Departments, previous to the meeting of Congress; and my own preparation for that event, leaves me but little time to attend to other matters.

The discontents with which you are assailed by one or other of the Proprietors in the Federal City must, unquestionably, be very disagreeable and troublesome to you, for they are extremely irksome to me.

In the case however before us, I conceive Mr. Covachichi might have received a definitive answer, without refering the

[58] Sir Isaac Heard.

matter to the Executive. On what part of the Contract with Greenleaf he has founded an opinion that a site was designated for a University, and has built his complaints, or how it came to pass that any allusion to such a measure should have found its way into that Contract, I have no more recollection than I have a conception, of what could have induced it; for your Clerk has omitted sending the Extract.

It is a well known fact, or to say the least, it has been always understood by me, that the establishment of a University in the Federal City depended upon several contingencies; one of which, and a material one too, was donations for the purpose. Until lately, this business could scarcely be said to have advanced beyond the *wishes* of its advocates, although these wishes were accompanied, generally, with expressions of what might be expected; and whenever the names of Mr. Blodget, and the proprietors of that vicinity, were mentioned in relation to this business, the idea (expressed or implied) always was, that they meant to give the ground.

Is this the intention of Mr. Covachichi relative to the object he is now contending for? if it is, and a sufficient space of ground, on these terms, can be obtained there for this purpose, without interfering with the property of Orphans, my opinion is, that the University ought to be placed there. But, if this is *not* the design, can that Gentleman, or any other expect that the public will buy (for an exchange is a purchase, and may be of the most troublesome kind) when it has unappropriated ground nearly as convenient? and why do this? because a site has been loosely talked of? because a proprietor, to enhance the sale of his property has coloured the advantages of it as highly as he could? or because the purchaser, omitting to investigate matters beforehand, wants the public to encounter an expence, it is unable to bear, by way of redress for his own incaution? What would have been the answer of the Commis-

sioners, if he had previously applied to them, to know if a University would be placed where he is now contending for? Certainly, that he ought not to calculate upon it. If that would have been the answer then (and unless there are facts which have escaped my recollection) I can conceive no other could have been given, it is not inapplicable at present.

A University was not even contemplated by Majr. L'Enfant in the plan of the City which was laid before Congress; taking its origen from another source. This plan you shall receive by the first safe hand who may be going to the Federal City. By it you may discover (tho' almost obliterated) the directions given to the Engraver, by Mr. Jefferson, with a pencil, what parts to omit. The principle on which it was done, I have communicated to you on more occasions than one. With esteem &c.

PS. Since writing the foregoing, I have received the extract, omitted to be enclosed in your letter of the 25th. ulto.

I do not recollect ever to have seen, or heard of it before. Nor do I see any cause to change my opinion since I have done so, unless upon the Condition which is mentioned in the body of this letter. that is, receiving the ground for the proposed Site, as a donation.[59]

*To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Philadelphia, December 3, 1796.

Sir: I have read all the letters of General Wayne, and their enclosures; as I have also done those of Captn. Bruff and others, which you have laid before me.

Note such matters (in all of them) as require particular directions, which I shall be ready to give whenever they are laid before me.

[59] From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

The other parts, which call only for Office attention, will, I am persuaded, meet with prompt and ready dispatch. It is my wish to keep the business of the Departments up, leaving no burthen on my Successor that ought, of right, to be executed while I am in Office.

To WILLIAM PEARCE

Philadelphia, December 4, 1796.

Mr. Pearce: Getting no letter from you by the Post of yesterday, nor receiving any account from home, leads me to conclude that something more than common has happened, as your last letter is dated the 17th of November.

Hearing nothing of the state, in which my business is, for so long a time, especially too as the weather, for the Season, has been severe, I have but little to found my letter upon at this time.

Enclosed you have a bill of lading, and Invoice of Goods shipped on board of Captn Ellwood, on my account. Let the Oil and paint be put into some secure Cellar, there to remain until I come home; and such of the Oznabrigs as is necessary for cloathing the people (most wanting) to be cut out and made up as fast as circumstances will permit. In doing this, I beg every care and attention may be used to prevent waste or embezzlement in the Act of cutting out; and by taking a list, to be left, of all who are served; otherwise the same persons, if they thought they could succeed, would apply over and over again. Give out but one roll of Oznabrigs at a time, and see how that is cut, worked up, and disposed of, before another piece is delivered. How far the Gardeners wife, or Allisons wife is to be depended upon in a business of this sort, I know not; but this I know, it is as little as either of them can do for the inconvenience I sustain by their living there, and the attendance they receive from my People.

The enclosed letter to the Gardener, relative to the planting of shrubs, seal and deliver to him after you have read it; and if such freezing weather should arrive, before your departure, as I have described, give him all the assistance you can to improve it; and in case it does not, let Mr. Anderson know what my wishes are respecting this matter. I repeat to you my solicitude to have the Ice house prepared for, and *well* filled, and rammed, when Ice is formed. It will be of immense importance to me when I get home.

I hope Frank has taken particular care of the Tarriers.[60] I directed him to observe when the female was getting into heat, and let her be immediately shut up; and no other than the male Tarrier get to her. I wish you well, and am etc.[61]

*To JAMES MAURY

Philadelphia, December 5, 1796.

Sir: I have received several letters from you in the course of this year, but as none of them required a particular acknowledgment, and as my time is generally very much occupied I have been silent until now.

The object of my writing to you now, is to request that the balance of £105.8.7 due to me, as appears by your account current dated the 23d. of February in the present year may be remitted in the articles contained in the Invoice enclosed herewith.

I pray you to send them (Insured) by the first good opportunity to Alexandria or George Town on Potomac. Accept my thanks for the Tarriers you had the goodness to send me by Captn. Butts who took great care of them, and delivered them in good order. With esteem, etc.

[60] Terriers.

[61] From the printed text in M. D. Conway's *George Washington and Mount Vernon*, Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4).

Invoice of Goods to be Shipped for and consigned to, the Subscriber at Mount Vernon in Virginia by James Maury Esqr. and sent by the first Vessel bound to the Port of Alexandria, or George Town on Potok.

300 wt. of White lead ground in Oil
2 pieces of very fine Cambrick
2 Ditto Irish linnen a 4/. pr. yd. Sterlg.
2 Ditto Do Do 3/. Do. Do.
4 Ditto Do Do 2/.
1 Do. say 60 yds. 5/4. Sheeting, fine
6 large and handsome Table cloths. All to be of the same size, finess, and figure.
2 dozn. handsome Napkins to suit Ditto.

The surplus of the balance of £105.8.7 due to me, pr. your acct. current after Commission and charges, freight and Insurance on the above Goods are added to the cost thereof, is to be sent to me in good British Oznabrigs.

*To CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY

Philadelphia, December 5, 1796.

My dear Sir: Not being able to recollect with certainty, whether I expressed to you my ardent desire that no favourable occasion might be omitted, by you, of signifying how much it was my wish, and the wishes of the People of this country, that that friend to it, Mr. de la Fayette, could be liberated from his confinement, is the cause of my giving you the trouble of this address.

Not in my public character have I conceived myself authorised to move in this business; but in my private one I have used, and shall continue to use, every exertion in my power to effect this much desired object. For surely if a hard fate has attended any one, the fortunes of this Gentleman has met it.

It would give me much pleasure to hear of your safe arrival after an agreeable passage; and that your reception from the French Directory has been favourable. Of politics, or on matters of public concern, I shall say nothing; because you are too recently from this country to need information on the first subject, and from the Office of State you receive all that can be given on the second. In presenting compliments to Mrs. and Miss Pinckney, Mrs. Washington unites hers along with those of My dear Sir etc.

To GOVERNOR JOHN HAWKINS STONE

Philadelphia, December 7, 1796.

Sir: The attempts lately made by the Commissioners of the City of Washington to borrow Money in Europe for the purpose of carrying on the public buildings having failed or been retarded they have been authorised by me to apply to your State for a loan of One hundred and fifty thousand Dollars upon terms which they will communicate. Such is the present situation of foreign Nations with respect to Money, that according to the best information there is no reasonable hope of obtaining a loan in any of them immediately and applications can now only be made in the United States upon this subject with any prospect of success and perhaps no where with greater propriety than to the Legislature of Maryland where it must be presumed the most anxious solicitude is felt for the growth and prosperity of that City which is intended for the permanent Seat of Government in America.

If the State has it in its power to lend the money which is solicited, I persuade myself it will be done, and the more especially at this time when a loan is so indispensable that without it not only very great and many impediments must be endured

in the prossecution of the Work now in hand, but inevitable loss must be sustained by the funds of the City, in consequence of premature Sales of the public property. I have thought I ought not to omit to State for the information of the General Assembly, as well the difficulty of obtaining Money on loan, as the present necessity for it, which I must request the favor of you most respectfully to communicate. With very great respect etc.[62] [MD. H. S.]

To GUSTAVUS SCOTT

Philadelphia, December 7, 1796.

Sir: Taking into consideration the critical situation of the funds of the Commissioners, I have, though with much reluctance, written a letter to the Governor of Maryland (agreeably to the request of the Commissioners) to be laid before the assembly of that state. The letter is enclosed herewith. And left unsealed for your perusal; after which you will please to seal and deliver or have it delivered to the Governor. I am etc.[63]

EIGHTH ANNUAL ADDRESS TO CONGRESS[64]

December 7, 1796.

Fellow Citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives: In recurring to the internal situation of our Country, since I had last the pleasure to Address you, I find ample reason for a renewed expression of that gratitude to the ruler of the Uni-

[62] In the writing of George Washington Craik. The draft, in the writing of Charles Lee, with two changes by Washington, is in *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

[63] The draft, in the writing of Bartholomew Dandridge, is in *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

[64] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers* is the following: "At twelve Oclock, the President attended by the heads of Department and the Attorney General, went to the Chamber of the House of Representatives, where finding both Houses of Congress assembled, he delivered to them the following Speech."

verse, which a continued series of prosperity has so often and so justly called forth.

The Acts of the last Session, which required special arrangements, have been, as far as circumstances would admit, carried into operation.

Measures calculated to insure a continuance of the friendship of the Indians, and to preserve peace along the extent of our interior frontier, have been digested and adopted. In the framing of these, care has been taken to guard on the one hand, our advanced Settlements from the predatory incursions of those unruly Individuals, who cannot be restrained by their Tribes; and on the other hand, to protect the rights secured to the Indians by Treaty; to draw them nearer to the civilized state; and inspire them with correct conceptions of the Power, as well as justice of the Government.

The meeting of the deputies from the Creek Nation at Colerain, in the State of Georgia, which had for a principal object the purchase of a parcel of their land, by that State, broke up without its being accomplished; the Nation having, previous to their departure, instructed them against making any Sale; the occasion however has been improved, to confirm by a new Treaty with the Creeks, their pre-existing engagements with the United States; and to obtain their consent, to the establishment of Trading Houses and Military Posts within their boundary; by means of which, their friendship, and the general peace, may be more effectually secured.

The period during the late Session, at which the appropriation was passed, for carrying into effect the Treaty of Amity, Commerce, and Navigation, between the United States and his Britannic Majesty, necessarily procrastinated the reception of the Posts stipulated to be delivered, beyond the date assigned for that event. As soon however as the Governor General of

Canada could be addressed with propriety on the subject, arrangements were cordially and promptly concluded for their evacuation; and the United States took possession of the principal of them, comprehending Oswego, Niagara, Detroit, Michelimackina, and Fort Miami; where, such repairs, and additions have been ordered to be made, as appeared indispensible.

The Commissioners appointed on the part of the United States and of Great Britain, to determine which is the river St. Croix, mentioned in the Treaty of peace of 1783, agreed in the choice of Egbert Benson Esqr. of New York, for the third Commissioner. The whole met at St. Andrews, in Passamaquoddy Bay, in the beginning of October; and directed surveys to be made of the Rivers in dispute; but deeming it impracticable to have these Surveys completed before the next Year, they adjourned, to meet at Boston in August 1797, for the final decision of the question.

Other Commissioners appointed on the part of the United States, agreeably to the seventh Article of the Treaty with Great Britain, relative to captures and condemnations of Vessels and other property, met the Commissioners of his Britannic Majesty in London, in August last, when John Trumbull, Esqr. was chosen by lot, for the fifth Commissioner. In October following the Board were to proceed to business. As yet there has been no communication of Commissioners on the part of Great Britain, to unite with those who have been appointed on the part of the United States, for carrying into effect the sixth Article of the Treaty.

The Treaty with Spain, required, that the Commissioners for running the boundary line between the territory of the United States, and his Catholic Majesty's Provinces of East and West Florida, should meet at the Natchez, before the expiration of

six Months after the exchange of the ratifications, which was effected at Aranjuez on the 25th. day of April; and the troops of his Catholic Majesty occupying any Posts within the limits of the United States, were within the same period to be withdrawn. The Commissioner of the United States therefore, commenced his journey for the Natchez in September; and troops were ordered to occupy the Posts from which the Spanish Garrisons should be withdrawn. Information has been recently received, of the appointment of a Commissioner on the part of his Catholic Majesty for running the boundary line, but none of any appointment, for the adjustment of the claims of our Citizens, whose Vessels were captured by the Armed Vessels of Spain.

In pursuance of the Act of Congress, passed in the last Session, for the protection and relief of American Seamen, Agents were appointed, one to reside in Great Britain, and the other in the West Indies. The effects of the Agency in the West Indies, are not yet fully ascertained; but those which have been communicated afford grounds to believe, the measure will be beneficial. The Agent destined to reside in Great Britain, declining to accept the appointment, the business has consequently devolved on the Minister of the United States in London; and will command his attention, until a new Agent shall be appointed.

After many delays and disappointments, arising out of the European War, the final arrangements for fulfilling the engagements made to the Dey and Regency of Algiers, will, in all present appearance, be crowned with success: but under great, tho' inevitable disadvantages, in the pecuniary transactions, occasioned by that War; which will render a further provision necessary. The actual liberation of all our Citizens who were prisoners in Algiers, while it gratifies every feeling heart, is

itself an earnest of a satisfactory termination of the whole negotiation. Measures are in operation for effecting Treaties with the Regencies of Tunis and Tripoli.

To an active external Commerce, the protection of a Naval force is indispensable. This is manifest with regard to Wars in which a State itself is a party. But besides this, it is in our own experience, that the most sincere Neutrality is not a sufficient guard against the depredations of Nations at War. To secure respect to a Neutral Flag, requires a Naval force, organized, and ready to vindicate it, from insult or aggression. This may even prevent the necessity of going to War, by discouraging belligerent Powers from committing such violations of the rights of the Neutral party, as may first or last, leave no other option. From the best information I have been able to obtain, it would seem as if our trade to the mediterranean, without a protecting force, will always be insecure; and our Citizens exposed to the calamities from which numbers of them have but just been relieved.

These considerations invite the United States, to look to the means, and to set about the gradual creation of a Navy. The increasing progress of their Navigation, promises them, at no distant period, the requisite supply of Seamen; and their means, in other respects, favour the undertaking. It is an encouragement, likewise, that their particular situation, will give weight and influence to a moderate Naval force in their hands. Will it not then be adviseable, to begin without delay, to provide, and lay up the materials for the building and equipping of Ships of War; and to proceed in the Work by degrees, in proportion as our resources shall render it practicable without inconvenience; so that a future War of Europe, may not find our Commerce in the same unprotected state, in which it was found by the present.

Congress have repeatedly, and not without success, directed their attention to the encouragement of Manufactures. The object is of too much consequence, not to insure a continuance of their efforts, in every way which shall appear eligible. As a general rule, Manufactures on public account, are inexpedient. But where the state of things in a Country, leaves little hope that certain branches of Manufacture will, for a great length of time obtain; when these are of a nature essential to the furnishing and equipping of the public force in time of War, are not establishments for procuring them on public account, *to the extent of the ordinary demand for the public service,* recommended by strong considerations of National policy, as an exception to the general rule? Ought our Country to remain in such cases, dependant on foreign supply, precarious, because liable to be interrupted? If the necessary Articles should, in this mode cost more in time of peace, will not the security and independence thence arising, form an ample compensation? Establishments of this sort, commensurate only with the calls of the public service in time of peace, will, in time of War, easily be extended in proportion to the exigencies of the Government; and may even perhaps be made to yield a surplus for the supply of our Citizens at large; so as to mitigate the privations from the interruption of their trade. If adopted, the plan ought to exclude all those branches which are already, or likely soon to be, established in the Country; in order that there may be no danger of interference with pursuits of individual industry.

It will not be doubted, that with reference either to individual, or National Welfare, Agriculture is of primary importance. In proportion as Nations advance in population, and other circumstances of maturity, this truth becomes more apparent; and renders the cultivation of the Soil more and more, an object of public patronage. Institutions for promoting it, grow up,

supported by the public purse: and to what object can it be dedicated with greater propriety? Among the means which have been employed to this end, none have been attended with greater success than the establishment of Boards, composed of proper characters, charged with collecting and diffusing information, and enabled by premiums, and small pecuniary aids, to encourage and assist a spirit of discovery and improvement. This species of establishment contributes doubly to the increase of improvement; by stimulating to enterprise and experiment, and by drawing to a common centre, the results everywhere of individual skill and observation; and spreading them thence over the whole Nation. Experience accordingly has shewn, that they are very cheap Instruments, of immense National benefits.

I have heretofore proposed to the consideration of Congress, the expediency of establishing a National University; and also a Military Academy. The desirableness of both these Institutions, has so constantly increased with every new view I have taken of the subject, that I cannot omit the opportunity of once for all, recalling your attention to them.

The Assembly to which I address myself, is too enlightened not to be fully sensible how much a flourishing state of the Arts and Sciences, contributes to National prosperity and reputation. True it is, that our Country, much to its honor, contains many Seminaries of learning highly respectable and useful; but the funds upon which they rest, are too narrow, to command the ablest Professors, in the different departments of liberal knowledge, for the Institution contemplated, though they would be excellent auxiliaries.

Amongst the motives to such an Institution, the assimilation of the principles, opinions and manners of our Country men, but the common education of a portion of our Youth from every

quarter, well deserves attention. The more homogeneous our Citizens can be made in these particulars, the greater will be our prospect of permanent Union; and a primary object of such a National Institution should be, the education of our Youth in the science of *Government.* In a Republic, what species of knowledge can be equally important? and what duty, more pressing on its Legislature, than to patronize a plan for communicating it to those, who are to be the future guardians of the liberties of the Country?

The Institution of a Military Academy, is also recommended by cogent reasons. However pacific the general policy of a Nation may be, it ought never to be without an adequate stock of Military knowledge for emergencies. The first would impair the energy of its character, and both would hazard its safety, or expose it to greater evils when War could not be avoided. Besides that War, might often, not depend upon its own choice. In proportion, as the observance of pacific maxims, might exempt a Nation from the necessity of practising the rules of the Military Art, ought to be its care in preserving, and transmitting by proper establishments, the knowledge of that Art. Whatever argument may be drawn from particular examples, superficially viewed, a thorough examination of the subject will evince, that the Art of War, is at once comprehensive and complicated; that it demands much previous study; and that the possession of it, in its most improved and perfect state, is always of great moment to the security of a Nation. This, therefore, ought to be a serious care of every Government: and for this purpose, an Academy, where a regular course of Instruction is given, is an obvious expedient, which different Nations have successfully employed.

The compensations to the Officers of the United States, in various instances, and in none more than in respect to the most

important stations, appear to call for Legislative revision. The consequences of a defective provision, are of serious import to the Government. If private wealth, is to supply the defect of public retribution, it will greatly contract the sphere within which, the selection of Characters for Office, is to be made, and will proportionally diminish the probability of a choice of Men, able, as well as upright: Besides that it would be repugnant to the vital principles of our Government, virtually to exclude from public trusts, talents and virtue, unless accompanied by wealth.

While in our external relations, some serious inconveniences and embarrassments have been overcome, and others lessened, it is with much pain and deep regret I mention, that circumstances of a very unwelcome nature, have lately occurred. Our trade has suffered, and is suffering, extensive injuries in the West Indies, from the Cruisers, and Agents of the French Republic; and communications have been received from its Minister here, which indicate the danger of a further disturbance of our Commerce, by its authority; and which are, in other respects, far from agreeable.

It has been my constant, sincere, and earnest wish, in conformity with that of our Nation, to maintain cordial harmony, and a perfectly friendly understanding with that Republic. This wish remains unabated; and I shall persevere in the endeavour to fulfil it, to the utmost extent of what shall be consistent with a just, and indispensable regard to the rights and honour of our Country; nor will I easily cease to cherish the expectation, that a spirit of justice, candour and friendship, on the part of the Republic, will eventually ensure success.

In pursuing this course however, I cannot forget what is due to the character of our Government and Nation; or to a full and entire confidence in the good sense, patriotism, self-respect, and fortitude of my Countrymen.

I reserve for a special Message a more particular communication on this interesting subject.

Gentlemen of the House of Representatives: I have directed an estimate of the Appropriations, necessary for the service of the ensuing year, to be submitted from the proper Department; with a view of the public receipts and expenditures, to the latest period to which an account can be prepared.

It is with satisfaction I am able to inform you, that the Revenues of the United States continue in a state of progressive improvement.

A reinforcement of the existing provisions for discharging our public Debt, was mentioned in my Address at the opening of the last Session. Some preliminary steps were taken towards it, the maturing of which will, no doubt, engage your zealous attention during the present. I will only add, that it will afford me, heart felt satisfaction, to concur in such further measures, as will ascertain to our Country the prospect of a speedy extinguishment of the Debt. Posterity may have cause to regret, if, from any motive, intervals of tranquillity are left unimproved for accelerating this valuable end.

Gentlemen of the Senate, and of the House of Representatives: My solicitude to see the Militia of the United States placed on an efficient establishment, has been so often, and so ardently expressed, that I shall but barely recall the subject to your view on the present occasion; at the same time that I shall submit to your enquiry, whether our Harbours are yet sufficiently secured.

The situation in which I now stand, for the last time, in the midst of the Representatives of the People of the United States, naturally recalls the period when the Administration of the present form of Government commenced; and I cannot omit the occasion, to congratulate you and my Country, on the

success of the experiment; nor to repeat my fervent supplications to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, and Sovereign Arbiter of Nations, that his Providential care may still be extended to the United States; that the virtue and happiness of the People, may be preserved; and that the Government, which they have instituted, for the protection of their liberties, may be perpetual.[65]

*To REVEREND JACOB VAN VLECK

Philadelphia, December 7, 1796.

Revd. Sir: The letter you were pleased to favour me with, relative to my (grand) niece Maria Washington, was (a copy of it) sent to Mr. Lear, who married her mother, and is her guardian, with a request that he would ascertain the precise time for

[65] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

On December 12 the Senate in a body waited on the President at his house, at noon, when the Vice President "delivered" the address of the Senate in answer to this address. This answer is entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

The President replied briefly, and, in response to the Senate's reference to his retirement and his Farewell Address, said: "For the notice you take of my public services, civil and military, and your kind wishes for my personal happiness, I beg you to accept my cordial thanks. Those services, and greater had I possessed the ability to render them, were due to the unanimous calls of my Country; and its approbation is my abundant reward." This reply is also entered in the "Letter Book."

The House of Representatives waited upon the President, at his house, at 2 o'clock p. m., December 15, when the Speaker delivered to the President the reply of the House to the address, to which the President replied at greater length than he did to the Senate. He said, in part:

"To a Citizen whose views were unambitious, who preferred the shade and tranquillity of private life to the splendour and solicitude of elevated stations, and whom the voice of duty and his country could alone have drawn from his chosen retreat, no reward for his public services can be so grateful as public approbation, accompanied by a consciousness that to render those services useful to that Country has been his single aim: and when this approbation is expressed by the Representatives of a free and enlightened Nation, the reward will admit of no addition. Receive, Gentlemen, my sincere and affectionate thanks for this signal testimony that my services have been acceptable and useful to my Country: the strong confidence of my fellow Citizens, while it animated all my actions, ensured their zealous cooperation, which rendered those services successful. The virtue and wisdom of my Successors, joined with the patriotism and intelligence of the Citizens who compose the other Branches of Government, I firmly trust will lead them to the adoption of measures which by the beneficence of Providence, will give stability to our System of government, add to its success, and secure to ourselves and to posterity that liberty which is to all of us so dear." The reply of the House and the rejoinder of the President are entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

her entering the School for young Ladies, under your auspices, at Bethlehem.

Enclosed you have his answer, and you have to decide whether the first of April, or an earlier day will suit your purposes best, to receive the child. She is fatherless and motherless; to have with her therefore the daughter[66] of Colo. Ball, who is the daughter of her father's Sister also, would be very pleasing to the two girls, if it could be made convenient to the School.

Your answer to these requests, if put under cover to me, shall be immediately forwarded to Mr. Lear, for his government. Before I conclude, I pray you to accept my thanks for your ready consent to admit the child, in whose behalf I first applied; and for the favourable Sentiments you have been pleased to express for Revd. Sir Your etc.

*To SIR JOHN SINCLAIR

Philadelphia, December 10, 1796.

Sir: Since I had the honor of writing to you in June last, I have been favoured with your letters of the 14th. and 30th of May and 10th. of September; accompanying the additional appendix to the chapter on manures; your address to the Board of Agriculture; and other valuable productions relative to that important subject.

For your goodness in sending them to me, I pray your to accept my best thanks, and regrets at the sametime for the inflamation in your eyes; which, to a man as actively, and as usefully employed in one of the most interesting pursuits that can occupy a rational mind as you are must be doubly afflictive. If my wishes could contribute to a removal of the malady, they would be offered with much Sincerity.

[66] The name is not given in Lear's letter of Dec. 2, 1796, but she was Mildred Thornton Ball.

The result of the experiments entrusted to the care of Doctr. Fordyce,[67] must be as curious as they may prove interesting to the Science of Husbandry. Not less so will be, an intelligent solution of those queries relative to live Stock, which are handed to the public.

A few months more, say the third of March next, and the scenes of my political life will close, and leave me in the shades of retirement; when, if a few years are allowed me to enjoy it (many I cannot expect, being upon the verge of Sixty five), and health is continued to me, I shall peruse with pleasure and edification, the fruits of your meritorious labours, for the improvement of Agriculture; and shall have leizure, I trust, to realize some of the useful discoveries which have been made in the science of Husbandry, Patronised by you, so much for the interest of mankind, and your own honor.

Until the above period shall have arrived, and particularly during the present Session of Congress, which commenced the 5th. instant; I can give but little attention to matters out of the line of my immediate avocations: I did not, however, omit the occasion at the opening of the Session, to call the attention of that body to the importance of Agriculture. What will be the result I know not at present, but if it should be favourable, the hints which you will have it in your power to give, cannot fail of being gratefully received by the members who may constitute the Board.

The articles entrusted to the care of Doctr. Edwards[68] came safe, and while all of them are curious; and entitled to my particular acknowledgments, none deserve to be held in higher estimation than the heads of the Egyptian Wheat. They came much too late however for our usual seed time, but I delayed

[67] Dr. George(?) Fordyce.
[68] Dr. Sydenham Teak(?) Edwards.

not a moment in sending them to my Manager at Mount Vernon, with particular directions how to dispose of them to the best advantage; reserving one head as a resource, in case of failure from late Sowing.

Certainly no good reason can be assigned why the Hemp of New Zealand should not thrive with us, as that country lyes in about the same Southern latitude that our middle States do in the Northern. The Hemp of the East Indies grows well here (from my own experience) and I have no doubt of the Tea plant succeeding in So. Carolina and Georgia.

The Gentlemen whose names you have mentioned in your letter of the 10th of September, will, I am persuaded, be gratified for your civilities. The true policy of this country is to live in peace and amity with all the World; and I am sure it is the wish of the government that it should do so, as long as is consistent with the respect that is due to itself.

I cannot conclude without requesting your acceptance of my grateful acknowledgments, for the expression of your wishes to see me in Great Britain, and under your hospitable roof; But I believe there are few things more certain than that after I have retired to Mount Vernon, I shall never go twenty miles beyond the limits of it; unless perchance, I should visit some landed property (under leases) at the distance of about Seventy miles from it. With very great esteem etc.

*To RICHARD PETERS

December 10, 1796.

Dear Sir: Herewith, you will not only receive the outlines &ca. (asked for yesterday) but the Appendix thereto; and other productions from the same quarter; which when you have done with, be so good as to return.

These, or some of the Papers, may be of use to a Committee, if Congress should incline to take up the subject of Agriculture.

Your observations, with the return of the Papers, will be very acceptable to Dr. Sir. Yr. etc.[69]

*To SIR JOHN SINCLAIR

(Private)

Philadelphia, December 11, 1796.

Sir: The near view which you have of the Revolution in France, and of the political state of things in Europe, especially those of Great Britain, has enabled you to form a judgment with so much more accuracy than I could do, of the probable result of the perturbated state of the countries which compose that quarter of the globe, and of the principal actors on that theatre, that it wd. be presumption in me, at the distance of 3000 miles, to give an opinion relatively to either men, or measures; and therefore, I will proceed to the information required in your private letter of the 11th of September, wch I will give from the best knowledge I possess, and with the candour you have a right to expect from me.

The United States, as you well know, are very extensive, more than 1500 miles between the North Eastern, and So. Western extremities; all parts of which, from the Seaboard to the Apalachian Mountains, (which divide the Eastern from the Western waters) are entirely settled; though not as compactly as they are susceptible of; and settlements are progressing rapidly beyond them.

Within so great a space, you are not to be told, that there are a great variety of climates; and you will readily suppose too that, there are all sorts of land, differently improved, and of

[69] From a facsimile of the original kindly presented by J. D. B. Peters, of Tampa, Fla.

various prices, according to the quality of the Soil; its contiguity to, or remoteness from Navigation; the nature of the improvements, and other local circumstances. These however, are only sufficient for the formation of a *general* opinion, for there are material deviations, as I shall mention hereafter.

In the New England States, and to Pennsylvania inclusively, landed property is more divided than it is in the States South of them. The farms are smaller, the buildings and other improvements, generally, better; and, of consequence, the population is greater: But then, the climate, especially to the Eastward of Hudsons river, is cold, the winter long, consuming a great part of the Summers labour in support of their Stocks, during the Winter: nevertheless, it is a country abounding in grass, and furnishes much fine Beef, besides exporting many horses to the West Indies. A Milldew or blight (I am speaking now of the New England States particularly) prevents them from raising Wheat adequate to their own consumption; and of other grains they export little or none: Fish being their Staple. They live well notwithstanding, and are a happy People. Their numbers are not augmented by foreign Emigrants; yet, from their circumscribed limits, compact situation, and natural population, they are filling the western parts of the State of New York, and the country on the Ohio with their own surplusage.

New Jersey is a small state, and all parts of it, except the Southwestern, are pleasant, healthy, and productive of all kinds of grain, &ca. Being surrounded on two sides by New York, and on the other two by Delaware River and the Atlantic, it has no land of its own to supply the surplus of its population, of course their emigrations are principally towards the Ohio.

Pennsylvania is a large state, and from the policy of its founder, and of the government since; and especially from the celebrity of Philadelphia, has become the general recepticle of

foreigners from all countries, and of all descriptions; many of whom soon take an active part in the politics of the State; and coming over full of prejudices against their own governments, some against all government, you will be enabled, without any comment of mine, to draw your own inference of their conduct.

Delaware is a very small State, the greater part of which lyes low, and is supposed to be unhealthy. The Eastern Shore of Maryland is similiar thereto. The lands in both, however, are good.

But the Western parts of the last mentioned State, and of Virginia, quite to the line of No. Carolina, above tide water, and more especially above the Blue Mountains are similar to those of Pennsylvania between the Susquehanna and Potomac Rivers, in Soil, climate and productions; and in my opinion will be considered, if it is not considered so already, as the Garden of America; forasmuch as it lyes between the two extremes of heat and cold, partaking in a degree of the advantages of both, without feeling much, the inconveniences of either: and with truth it may be said, is among the most fertile lands in America, East of the Apalachian Mountains.

The uplands of North and So. Carolina, and Georgia, are not dissimilar in *Soil;* but as they approach the lower latitudes, are less congenial to Wheat, and are supposed to be proportionably more unhealthy. Towards the Seaboard of all the Southern States (and further South the more so) the country is low, Sandy and unhealthy; for which reason I shall say little concerning them; for as I should not chuse to be an inhabitant of them myself, I ought not to say any thing that would induce others to be so.

This general description is furnished, that you may be enabled to form an idea of the *part* of the United States which would be

most congenial to your inclination. To pronounce with any degree of precision what lands could be obtained for in the parts I have enumerated, is next to impossible, for the reasons I have before assigned; but upon pretty good data it may be said, that those in Pennsylvania are higher than those in Maryland (and I believe in any other State) declining in price as you go southerly, until the Rice Swamps of So. Carolina and Georgia are met with, and these are as much above the medium in price, as they are below it in health. I understand however, that from 30 to 40 dollars pr. Acre (I fix on dollars because they apply equally to *all* the States, and because their relative value to sterling is well understood) may be denominated the medium price in the vicinity of the Susquehanna, in the State of Pennsylvania: from 20 to 30 on the Potomac, both in what is called the Valley, that is, lying between the Blue Mountains and North Mountain and wch. are the richest lands we have. and less, as I have noticed before, as you proceed Southerly. But what may appear singular, and was alluded to in the former part of this letter, the lands in the parts of which I am now speaking, on, and contiguous to, tide water (with local exceptions) are in lower estimation than those which are above, and more remote from Navigation. The causes however are apparent: 1. the land is better. 2. higher and more healthy. 3. they are chiefly (if not altogether, in the occupation of Farmers; and 4. from a combination of all them, purchasers are attracted, and of consequence the prices rise in proportion to the demand.

The rise in the value of landed property, in this country, has been progressive, ever since my attention has been turned to the subject (now more than 40 years); but for the last three or four of that period, it has increased beyond all calculation, owing in part to the attachment to, and the confidence which the people are beginning to place in, their form of Government; and to

the prosperity of the country from a variety of concurring causes, none more than to the late high prices of its produce.

From what I have said, you will have perceived that the present prices of Land in Pennsylvania are higher than they are in Maryland and Virginia, although they are not of Superior quality. Two reasons have already been assigned for this, first, that in the settled part of it, the land is divided into smaller farms, and more improved; and 2dly being, in a greater degree than any other, the recepticle of emigrants, these receive their first impressions in Philadelphia, and rarely look beyond the limits of the State; but besides these, two other causes not a little operative may be added; namely, that until Congress passed general Laws relative to naturalization and citizenship, foreigners found it easier to obtain the priviledges annexed to them in this State than elsewhere; and because there are Laws here for the gradual abolition of Slavery, which neither of the two States above mentioned have, at present, but which nothing is more certain than that they must have, and at a period not remote.

Notwithstanding these obstacles, and although I may incur the charge of partiality in hazarding such an opinion at *this time,* I do not hesitate to pronounce that, the Lands on the Waters of Potomack will, in a few years, be in greater demand, and in higher estimation than in any other part of the United States. But as I ought not to advance this doctrine without assigning reasons for it, I will request you to examine a general Map of the United States, and the following facts will strike you at first view. that they lye in the most temperate latitude of the United States; that the main River runs in a *direct* course to the expanded parts of the Western Country, and approximates nearer to the principal branches of the Ohio than any other Eastern water, and of course must become a great, if not

(under all circumstances) the best highway into that Region; That the upper Sea port of the Potomac is considerably nearer to a large portion of the State of Pennsylvania than that portion is to Philadelphia, besides accommodating the settlers thereof with inland navigation for more than 200 miles. that the amazing extent of tide navigation afforded by the Bay and Rivers of Chesepeake has scarcely a parallel. When to these are added, that a site at the junction of the inland, and tide navigations of that river is chosen for the permanent Seat of the general government, and is in rapid preparation for its reception. that the inland Navigation of the River is nearly completed to the extent above mentioned, and that its lateral branches are capable of great improvement, at a small expence through the most fertile parts of Virginia, in a Southerly direction, and crossing Maryland and extending into Pennsylvania in a northerly one; thro' which (independent of what may come from the Western country) an immensity of produce will be water borne, thereby making the Federal City the great emporium of the United States. I say, when these things are taken into consideration, I am under no apprehension of having the opinion I have given relative to the value of land on Potomac, controverted by impartial men.

There are farms always, and every where for Sale; if therefore, events should induce you to cast an eye towards America, there need be no apprehension of your being accommodated to your liking; and if I could be made useful to you therein, you might command my services with the greatest freedom.

Within full view of Mount Vernon, seperated therefrom by Water only, is one of the most beautiful seats on the River, for sale; but of greater magnitude than you seem to have contemplated. It is called Belvoir, and did belong to George William Fairfax Esqr.; who, was he living, would now be Baron of

Cameron, as his younger brother in this country (he George William dying without issue) at present is, though he does not take upon himself the title. This seat was the residence of the above named Gentleman before he went to England, and was accommodated with very good buildings, which were burnt soon after he left them. There are near 2000 Acres of land belonging to the tract, surrounded in a manner by water. The Mansion house stood on high and commanding ground: the soil is not of the first quality, but a considerable part of it lying level may with proper management, be profitably cultivated. There are some small tenements on the Estate, but the greater part thereof is in wood. At present it belongs to Thomas Fairfax, Son of Bryan Fairfax, the Gentleman who will not, as I said before, take upon himself the title of Baron of Cameron. A year or two ago the price he fixed on the land was (as I have been informed) 33 1/3 dollars pr. Acre; whether not getting that sum, or whether he is no longer disposed to sell it, I am unable, with precision to say, for I have heard nothing concerning his intentions lately.

With respect to the tenements I have offered to let, appertaining to my Mount Vernon Estate, I can give no better description of them, and of their appurtenances, than what is contained in the printed Advertisement herewith enclosed: but that you may have a more distinct view of the farms, and their relative situation to the Mansion House, a sketch from actual Survey is also enclosed; annexed to which, I have given you from memory, the relative situation, and form of the Seat at Belvoir.

The terms on which I had authorised the Superintendent of my concerns at Mount Vernon, to lease the farms there, are also enclosed; which, with the other papers, and the general information herein detailed, will throw all the light I am enabled to

give you, upon the subject of your enquiry. To have such a tenant as Sir John Sinclair, however desirable it might be, is an honor I dare not hope for; and to alienate any part of the Fee simple estate of Mount Vernon is a measure I am not inclined to, as all the Farms are connected, and are parts of a whole.

With very great esteem etc.

P. S. As I shall have an opportunity in the course of the present Session of Congress to converse with the Members thereof from different States, and from different parts of each State, I will write you a supplimentary account if essential information should be obtained in addition to, or corrective of, what is given to you in the aforegoing sheets.[70]

To WILLIAM PEARCE

Philadelphia, December 11, 1796.

Mr. Pearce: Since my last to you was dispatched, I have received your letters of the 30th of Novr and 4th inst.

I am sorry to hear that your Wheat begins to heat. If it does this in a degree to do it much injury, it ought to be disposed of for the best price you can get; but otherwise, as I have waited so long to grind it, and shall have occasion for the Bran, I had rather Manufacture it myself.

It is a matter of astonishment to me, that the lower floor of the Barn at Dogue-Run has given way so soon. How it was laid at first, being from home, I know not; but if it had been extended according to my directions, and the end of the sleepers, by the tenons had rested on a Wall, it could not have given way until the Sleepers themselves had failed. As the case is, I must endeavour, after I come home, to make the floor without the circle, of some well tempered earth, or composition, to guard against

[70] From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Judge E. A. Armstrong, of Princeton, N. J.

the expence of such frequent decays. In the meantime, the best shift that can, must be made.

I must remind you of having the Pork killed and salted before you go away; and above all things attend to the Ice house, as it is of serious importance on account of fresh meat next summer, that it should be filled.

Not perceiving by the weekly repts, that any of the Trees at the Mansion house have been taken up, or trimmed; and as little, if anything, can be done at it now, give Mr. Anderson all the information you can relative to this business; and turn the string of Memorandums (which I sent to you sometime ago) over to him.[71]

Relying on Mr. Smiths making you the first payment (on the 24th inst) according to promise, I request again, that no demand against me may be left unpaid; among these pay Gray the Weaver; and let all that is owing to me, be reduced to promissary notes.

I hope all the Shelters for the Cattle are up, that they may be secure from Snows, Rain and cold weather; for it is always observable, that if they suffer in the early part of the Winter, they rarely get perfectly recovered of it.

Mr. Craik informs me that Clark (I think his name is) whom you recommended to him, has been very sick, but, notwithstanding, has given evident demonstrations of his fitness as an overlooker. I wish you would make it a point to see Clark, and fix him to me, as agreed, for the next year; otherwise I may have more difficulty in doing it, than at the present time; from causes which you will be at no loss to conjecture. It was extremely unlucky, after waiting so long to get an answer from the Eastern shore, that I had not waited a few days longer, until Clark arrived. Pray did you see the person on the Eastern

[71] See Memorandums for William Pearce, November, 1796, *ante*.

shore, when last there, from whom you had been expecting to hear? and what excuse did he make for not fulfilling his promise of writing to you?

In my next letter, I will send you a certificate of my satisfaction in your Services as a Manager.[72] I would have done it now, but am hurried, and it will be in time then. I am etc.[73]

To SENATORS ELIJAH PAINE AND ISAAC TICHENOR[74]

United States, December 12, 1796.

Gentlemen: With particular pleasure I receive the unanimous address of the Council and General Assembly of the State of Vermont. Altho' but lately admitted into the Union, yet the importance of your State, its love of liberty and its energy, were manifested in the earliest period of the revolution which established our independence. Unconnected in name only, but in reality united with the Confederated States, these felt and acknowledged the benefits of your cooperation. Their mutual safety and advantage duly appreciated, will never permit this union to be dissolved.

I enjoy great happiness in the testimony you have presented and in the other proofs exhibited from various parts of our country, that the operations of the general government have justified the hopes of our citizens at its formation, which is recognised as the era of national prosperity. The voluntary acknowledgments of my fellow citizens persuade me to believe, that my agency has contributed to produce this effect. This belief will be to me a source of permanent satisfaction, and those acknowledgments a rich reward.

[72] See Certificate to William Pearce, Dec. 18, 1796, *post.*

[73] From the printed text in M. D. Conway's *George Washington and Mount Vernon*, Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4).

[74] From Vermont.

My sincere thanks are due, and I beg you, Gentlemen, to make them acceptable, to the Council and General Assembly of the State of Vermont, for the very obliging and affectionate terms in which they notice me and my public services. To such confidence and support as I have experienced from Councils, Legislative Assemblies, and the great body of American Citizens, I owed the best exertions of every faculty I possessed, happy now in the reflection that our joint labours have been crowned with success. When withdrawn to the shade of private life, I shall view with increasing pleasure the growing prosperity of the United States: in the perfect protection of their government I trust to enjoy my retirement in tranquillity: and then, while indulging, a favourite wish of my heart, in agricultural pursuits, I may hope to make even my private business and amusement of some use to my country.[75]

*To TOBIAS LEAR

Philadelphia, December 14, 1796.

My dear Sir: Immediately upon the receipt of your letter of the 2d. instant, I sent a transcript of so much of it as related to Maria, and the daughter of Colo. Ball, to Mr. Van Vleck; with a request that he would answer the queries which were propounded therein, under a cover to me. Enclosed is his answer, and of course you will inform Colo. Ball thereof.

As I *know* that many unsuccessful applications had been made for admission into the young Ladies School at Bethlehem, about the time I wrote to Mr. Van Vleck, the reception of Maria and her Cousin must be considered as a particular favour, and Colo. Ball should make a point of it to be exact in complying

[75] The draft is in the writing of Timothy Pickering. The date line is in the writing of Washington.

with the requisitions that are enumerated in the Directors Letter.

A treatise, on the improvement of Canal Navigation, came into my hands by Doctr. Edwards as a present from the Author, a few days ago. As I shall have no time to look into it while I remain in this City, I make a deposit of it with you, until I return to Mount Vernon. According to Doctr. Edwards' account, Fultons System is putting *Lock* Navigation out of Vogue. I have not read a page in the Book, but if the Potomack company can extract any thing useful from it, I shall feel happy in having sent it to you. We are all well, except having bad colds, and join in best wishes for yourself and family. I am etc.

PS. Pray procure me 200 weight of good butter against our arrival at Mount Vernon which in all likelihood will be by the middle of March.

*To ROBERT FULTON

Philadelphia, December 14, 1796.

Sir: By the hands of Doctr. Edwards, I was favoured with your Treatise on the improvement of Canal navigation. For your goodness in sending it to me, I pray you to accept my best thanks.

The subject is interesting, and I dare presume is well treated; but as the Book came to me in the midst of busy preparatory scenes for Congress, I have not had leisure yet to give it the perusal which the importance of such a work would merit. I shall do it, with pleasure I am persuaded, when I have. With esteem etc.[76]

[76] Washington's copy of Fulton's *Treatise* is in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. "December 17. At noon the [Pennsylvania] Assembly went to the Presbyterian church on Market Street, where Dr. Rush, a member of the Philosophical Society, pronounced an eulogium in memory of their late president, David Rittenhouse. The church was crowded, President Washington and lady, with members of Congress being present."—*Diary of Jacob Hiltzheimer* (Philadelphia: 1893).

To WILLIAM PEARCE

Philadelphia, December 18, 1796.

Mr. Pearce: Your letter of the 11th, with the enclosures, came to my hands yesterday; and I am sorry to find by it that so late as *that*, you were still without rain. I hope what has fallen to-day, will have extended to you: here it has rained the whole day without ceasing.

I do not know whether I understand Mr. Alexr Smiths proposition, with respect to putting the note for 4839 dollars in the Bank, to be discounted at the end of Sixty days; making the Bank (instead of himself and securities) liable therefor. If he means, that at the end of the Sixty days, I am to receive that sum from the Bank without interest thereon for that time, I shall not accept the offer; because there is neither reason nor justice why I should suffer *that* loss for my indulgence to him; but on the other hand, if at the end of 60 days, it is to be paid at the bank with interest, in the same manner that it would be paid by him, I should suppose it ought to be preferred: however, as I know very little of Bank transactions, but believe that money matters stand rather on ticklish ground, I would (if you have an opportunity) have you consult Mr. Lear, and be governed by his advice in this business. If you have not that opportunity, act for me in the case, as you would for yourself, and I shall be satisfied therewith.

I will not have the ground, in which I directed Ivy and the wild honey suckle to be planted, plowed beforehand. Nor can I find what it is the Gardener means by saying he has as much to do between this and Christmas as he is able to accomplish, when one of his own hands (according to his report) is at work with the House gang, and might be recalled, besides which he

has been authorised to employ Frank, Hercules and Cyrus nay, even to call for more aid if necessary. If he won't do it, or makes any delay, or difficulty in doing it, desire him to give up my letter of directions; and order Allison to set about the work agreeably thereto. If the ground is as hard frozen as I presume it is, there being no Snow on it, he has missed the most favourable opportunity of taking the Plants up, with frozen earth to their roots, that ever occurred, or may occur again in seven years. And I suppose, after plowing the ground up, would give me a naked furrough to look at all next spring and summer, instead of a Plantation of flowering Shrubs. I am much displeased at his conduct.

It would give me great pleasure to have the New road compleated, or in a state of forwardness, this Winter and Spring; but I would not have this attempted at the expence of more important concerns. As you have crossed the road leading into Muddy-hole farm, let the Road from thence in a line as marked be opened into it, 16½ feet wide on each side of the stakes, which were set up.

I am sorry to hear that Mr. Neal continues so much indisposed, for my Carpenters really appear to me to do nothing; and there is Sall who was constantly at work when we were at home, is now regularly returned sick six days in the Week; and Mima, Dick, and some others, nearly as bad.

I had a letter from Mr. Anderson by the last Post, who informs me that it was not in his power to leave the concern he was engaged in at the time I wished him to be at Mount Vernon; but that he certainly would be there by the 27th or 28th of this month, if he was alive and well. I wish it may be convenient for you to stay a few days after he comes to give him a thorough insight into the business, and then transfer the directions I have given concerning it to him.

Shall I not want Clover, and other Grass seeds for the next year? and how much? As these things can neither be procured, or sent at all times, they shd be noticed in season. I wish you well and am etc.

P. S. What has Frank, Hercules and Cyrus been employed in. No mention is made of any work performed by them in the Gardeners or other Reports.[77]

CERTIFICATE TO WILLIAM PEARCE

Philadelphia, December 18, 1796.

Mr. William Pearce having Superintended the Farms, and other business appertaining to my estate of Mount Vernon, during my absence as President of the United States for the last three years (ending the 31st of the present month) It is due to him to declare, and I certify it accordingly, that his conduct during that period has given me entire satisfaction; and that I part with him reluctantly, at his own request, on account of a Rheumatic affection which he thinks would prevent him from giving that attention to my business which from laudable motives he conceives would be necessary.

His industry and zeal to serve me, during the period above mentioned have been conspicuous on all occasions. His knowledge in Farming, and mode of managing my business in all its relations, have been highly satisfactory to me. and I have every reason to believe that his conduct in paying and receiving money has been strictly regular and just. In a word, I have had great confidence in his honesty, sobriety, industry and skill; and, consequently, part with him with regret.[77]

[77] From the printed text in M. D. Conway's *George Washington and Mount Vernon*, Long Island Historical Society Memoirs (vol. 4).

*To ROBERT LEWIS

Philadelphia, December 19, 1796.

Dear Sir: A day or two ago I received your letter of the 4th. instant.

As it is more than probable that my Tenants on Goose Creek must have resolved, 'eer this, to go or stay; any opinion I can now give with respect to the terms, will have arrived too late. If the case however should be otherwise, get the best Rent you can from them for the ensuing year, or even let them remain on the old rent; as I am not disposed to give leases for *more* than Seven years, and wish for more time, and leizure, to consider the nature of my landed property, than I have been able to do for some years back, before I even grant them for that term. But if you find any difficulty in procuring tenants in the manner I have mentioned, you may in that case, adopt the mode which you yourself have suggested, in your letter of the above date; and confine the tenants to the fulfilment of the conditions therein mentioned with respect to cultivation, &ca. &ca.

I have not here, nor do I possess any where, I believe, a single paper relative to the Land on Deep run.[78] It was originally taken up by my *father* and uncle; in doing which, One Warner who was the Surveyor, contrived to leave out about 170 Acres for himself, as was afterwards discovered, and recovered. My Uncle gave his part to Warner Washington, and my father left his part to my brother Samuel and myself.

The first division took place during my non-age; the subdivision I left to my Brother Samuel to make; who had, as I have

[78] *Scribner's Magazine* for May, 1877, prints the text of a brief conveyance by Washington to Robert Lewis, dated Aug. 13, 1796, of the lands on Deep Run.

always understood, disposed of his property therein to Mr. Lawrence Washington of Chotanck. In what manner the latter was accomplished I know not, not being able to attend to the matter myself. The 170 Acre Tract became mine, but by what means I am unable at this time, to give any distinct account of, but *think*, my elder brother Lawrence who was the acting Executor of my fathers will, recovered it from Warner (the Surveyor) and gave it to me.

The original Patent for the large Tract was for 5000 Acres; the half of which, as has been observed, came to my brother Samuel and me, by a devise in my father's Will; it was him, not me that sold to Mr. Lawe. Washington of Chotanck. I never parted with a foot of mine until I gave it to you. Who Warner Washington sold to I know not.

This is the best, indeed the only account I have it in my power to give, relative to the Lands on Deep run. You did well therefore, in my opinion, to compromise for the small tract, in preference to letigeous investigation of Rights. And you must make the most you can of the other. Your Aunt unites with me in best wishes for yourself, Mrs. Lewis and the family, and I am etc.

To GEORGE WASHINGTON PARKE CUSTIS

Philadelphia, December 19, 1796.

Dear Washington: I am not certain whether I have written you since the receipt of your letter of the first instant, for, as my private letters are generally despatched in a hurry, and copies not often taken, I have nothing to resort to, to refresh my memory; be this, however, as it may, we are always glad to hear from you, though we do not wish that letter writing should interfere with your more useful and profitable occupation. The pleasure of hearing you were well, in good spirits, and pro-

gressing as we could wish in your studies, was communicated by your letter of the fourteenth instant, to your grandmamma; but what gave me particular satisfaction, was to find that you were going to commence a course of reading with Doctor Smith, of such books as he had chosen for the purpose. The first is very desirable, and the other indispensable; for, besides the duty enjoined upon you by the instructions of your preceptors, whilst your own judgment is locked up in immaturity; you now have a peculiar advantage in the attentions of Doctor Smith to you, who, being a man of learning and taste himself, will select such authors and subjects, as will lay the foundation of useful knowledge; let me impress it upon you, therefore, again and again, not only to yield implicit obedience to his choice and instructions in this respect, but to the course of studies also, and that you would pursue both with zeal and steadiness. Light reading (by this, I mean books of little importance) may amuse for the moment, but leaves nothing solid behind.

The same consequences would follow from inconstancy and want of steadiness, for 'tis to close application and constant perseverance, men of letters and science are indebted for their knowledge and usefulness; and you are now at that period of life (as I have observed to you in a former letter) when these are to be acquired, or lost forever. But as you are well acquainted with my sentiments on this subject, and know how anxious all your friends are to see you enter upon the grand theatre of life, with the advantages of a finished education, a highly cultivated mind, and a proper sense of your duties to God and man, I shall only add one sentiment more before I close this letter (which, as I have others to write, will hardly be in time for the mail), and that is, to pay due respect and obedience to your tutors, and affectionate reverence for the president of the college, whose character merits your highest regards. Let no bad example, for such is to be met in all seminaries, have an improper influence

upon your conduct. Let this be such, and let it be your pride, to demean yourself in such a manner to obtain the goodwill of your superiors, and the love of your fellow students.

Adieu, I sincerely wish you well, being your attached and affectionate friend.[79]

*To RUFUS KING

Philadelphia, December 22, 1796.

Dear Sir: The enclosed is a copy of a letter I took the liberty of writing to you agreeably to its date.[80]

Permit me to take the further liberty of entrusting the letters herewith sent, to your care. That to Count Rumford, is in answer to one without date or place, accompanying the first volume of his Essays, Political, Economical and Philosophical. This mark of his politeness required an acknowledgment on my part, but in truth I know not where to direct to him. His Essays are dedicated to the Elector, Palatine, reigning Duke of Bavaria, and dated in London, in July last, hence, I conclude he is now there.

My best respects attend Mrs. King, and with very great esteem etc.

*To COUNT RUMFORD[81]

Philadelphia, December 22, 1796.

Sir: In the month of November, I had the honor to receive your letter, and a few days since, that of the first Vol: of your Essays, Political Economical and Philosophical. For these marks of your polite attention to me, I pray you to accept my best thanks.

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[79] From the printed text in Custis's *Recollections of Washington*.

[80] This inclosure seems to have been a copy of the formal diplomatic letter of credence for Rufus King to the King of England, June 7, 1796, a typed copy of which was kindly supplied by James Gore King, of New York.

[81] Formerly Col. Benjamin Thompson, of the King's American Dragoons, British Provincial Troops.

Congress being in Session, and my time, consequently much occupied with the business of it, will allow me no leisure until the close thereof to give the work an attentive perusal; the doing of which will, I am persuaded, afford both pleasure and edification to Sir Your etc.

*To GOVERNOR JOHN HAWKINS STONE

Philadelphia, December 23, 1796.

Dear Sir: Yesterday I received your letter of the 16th. instant, covering the resolutions of the Senate and House of Delegates of the State of Maryland, passed on the 13th and 14th.[82] The very obliging and friendly terms in which you have made this communication, merit my sincere thanks.

The manner in which the two branches of the legislature of Maryland have expressed their sense of my services, is too honourable, and too affectionate ever to be forgotten. Without assigning to my exertions the extensive influence they are pleased to ascribe to them, I may with great truth say that, the exercise of every faculty I possessed was joined to the efforts of the virtue, talents and valour of my fellow-citizens to effect our Independence: and I concur with the Legislature in repeating, with pride and joy, what will be an everlasting honor to our country, that our revolution was so distinguished for moderation virtue and humanity, as to merit the eulogium they have pronounced of being unsullied with a crime.

[82] The resolves of the Maryland House of Delegates, Dec. 13, 1796, were printed in broadside form, and are in the *Washington Papers*. Referring to the Farewell Address, they decree, unanimously, "That to perpetuate this valuable present in the most striking view to posterity, it be printed and published with the laws of this session, as an evidence of our approbation of its political axioms, and a small testimony of the affection we bear to the precepts of Him, to whom, under Divine Providence, we are principally indebted for our greatest political blessings." The Maryland Senate concurred in these resolves, December 14. Governor Stone's letter of transmittal, dated December 16, is in the *Washington Papers*.

With the same entire devotion to my country, every act of my civil Administration has been aimed to secure to it those advantages which result from a stable and free government; and with gratitude to Heaven, I unite with the Legislature of Maryland in the pleasing reflections, that our country has continued to feel the blessings of peace, liberty and prosperity, whilst Europe and the Indies have been convulsed with the horrors of a dreadful and desolating war. My ardent prayers are offered that those afflicted regions may now speedily see their calamities terminated, and also feel the blessings of returning peace.

I cannot omit my acknowledgements to the Senate and House of Delegates for the manner in which they have noticed my late Address to my fellow citizens. This notice, with similar acts in other States,[83] leads me to hope that, the advice which therein I took the liberty to offer as the result of much experience and reflection, may produce some good.

Their kind wishes for my domestic happiness, in my contemplated retirement, are entitled to my cordial thanks.

If it shall please God to prolong a life already far advanced into the vale of years, no attending felicity can equal that which I shall feel in seeing the administration of our government operating to preserve the Independence, prosperity and welfare of the American People. With great respect etc.

*To GUSTAVUS SCOTT

Philadelphia, December 26, 1796.

Sir: Your favour of the 15th instt. was not received until the 22d. To what the delay is to be ascribed, I know not.

[83] All except three of the State legislatures took similar action, and their addresses, or resolves, together with Washington's replies, are entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*. A large number of unofficial addresses from citizen committees were also sent to the President. These, together with Washington's replies, fill 84 consecutive pages in the "Letter Book."

The voice of Maryland, as expressed by its legislature, in the Resolutions which you enclosed, is flattering indeed, as it respects myself, personally; and highly pleasing as it relates to their federal sentiments. I thank you for sendg. them.

From what you have said of the disposition of the Senate, of that State, the presumption is, that the loan of $100,000 for the use of the Federal City, must, 'ere this, have passed through all the requisite forms. The necessity of the case justified the obtaining of it on almost any terms, and the zeal of the Commissioners (if they, in their individual capacities, which they surely may do without hazarding anything) in making themselves liable for the amount, as it could not be had without, cannot fail of approbation. At the sametime I must confess that the request has a very singular appearance, and will not, I should suppose, be very grateful to the feelings of Congress.

With great esteem etc.[84]

*To ALEXANDER WHITE

Philadelphia, December 26, 1796.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 15th instt. was not received until friday last, too late for the Post of that day, of course the receipt of it could not meet an earlier acknowledgment than by the Mail of this morng.

I wish Mrs. White's determination had been otherwise than is announced in your letter; but if I understand the expression of it, as it respects yourself, I do not see what more the Public could reasonably require of you, than you are disposed to give, when after saying this determination must occasion your resignation you add, "unless my personal attendance may be considered as sufficient," and then subjoin, "My court business is

[84] From *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

so far disposed of, and I shall make such arrangements with respect to my property, that I have no doubt of being able to perform my full share of the duties of the office, if under existing circumstances, the residence of my family *ought* to be dispensed with."

However desirable on your account, and wished by others, that Mrs. White could have reconciled it to her inclination to have become a resident in the federal City, yet, tho' her not doing it is to be regretted, I am well disposed to accept the continuance of your services upon the terms I understand they are offered, the residence there yourself. It never was expected that a Commissioner should never be absent from his Post, though presumed always that such absence would be so timed as to produce no dereliction of, or inconvenience to, the public concerns which are entrusted to their management; and while there are three in Commission (if harmony prevails) matters may, certainly, be so arranged as to avoid these, as well as the unpleasant animadversions which otherwise might attach themselves.

I am perfectly satisfied that your own sense of propriety, will never suffer you to neglect any trust you wd. accept, and in that confidence I remain, etc.[85]

*To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, December 26, 1796.

Gentlemen: Your letters of the 30th. and 30th. of November and 5th of the present month, are now before me; the receipt of which have, until now, remained unacknowledged.

[85] From *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

I have not been unmindful however, of the contents of that, which relates to public property, &ca. in federal City; but, laying it with the two former Powers, and other Papers before the Attorney General of the United States, you will receive his opinion thereon under cover with this letter. It would have been sent sooner, had I not been desirous of a personal conference with that Gentleman; but which, for ten or twelve days or more, has been prevented by his indisposition, and this still confines him to his chamber.

I shall be ready, while I remain in Office, to execute any Power which you may suggest; the Attorney General approve, and the nature of the case will warrant, for the purpose of designating, and conveying the different descriptions of property therein, and it will lye with the Commissioners to bring these matters forward, as their attention must be more immediately turned to objects of that sort than mine possibly can be.

With respect to the claims of individual proprietors, to be compensated for the spaces occasioned by the intersection of Streets and Avenues, I should conceive that they might, with equal propriety, ask payment for the Streets themselves; but the terms of the original contract, or cession, if a dispute on this point should arise, must be recurred to, for I presume the opinion of the President, in such a case, would avail nothing. But, if angles are taken off, at these spaces, the case is materially altered; and, without designing it, you make a square where none was contemplated, and thereby not only lay the foundation of claim for *those angles* but for the space also which is made a square by that act.

I have never yet met with a single instance, where it has been proposed to depart from the published plan of the City than an inconvenience or dispute of some sort, has not, sooner, or later

occurred, for which reason I am persuaded there should be no departure from it, but in cases of necessity, or very obvious utility.

The Deed is returned. and with very great esteem etc.[86]

*To WILLIAM THORNTON

Philadelphia, December 26, 1796.

Sir: Your letter of the 4th. of the present month came to my hands in the usual course of the Post; but a pressure of other matters at that time, prevented my acknowledging the receipt of it at an earlier period.

As you seem sensible of the propriety of the Commissioners residing in the City, with the concerns of which they are intrusted, I have not the smallest doubt of your removing thither as soon as you can be accommodated in the house you have chosen, with the situation of which I am well pleased, as it is in the midst of your operations; and let me give it strongly as my opinion, that *all* the Offices, and *every matter,* and *thing* that relates to the City *ought* to be transacted therein, and the persons to whose care they are committed Residents. Measures of this sort, would form societies in the City, give it eclat, and by increasing the population, contribute not a little to the accommodation of the Members, who compose the Congress; for it is of little signification to prepare a house for that body to *sit in,* unless there are others for their beds and board. the latter of which are more enquired after than the former, by the present Members of Congress, now in this City. I have always thought therefore, that buildings between the Capitol and Presidents house ought to be encouraged as much as possible: and nothing would have a greater tendency towards accomplishing this,

[86] From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

than the Commissioners making that part of the City *their* residence, and compelling *all* those who are under their control to do the same, as fast as accommodations can be provided for them there, and around the Capitol. It may be relied on, that the residence in George Town, of those who are entrusted wth. the management of matters in the City is a drawback and a serious evil. Holding the Office of record there, is not a little complained of. These sentiments, although given to you, at this time, as an individual of the board, I wish to have strongly impressed upon that body. With great esteem etc.

*To THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

(Private)

Tuesday, December 27, 1796.

Dear Sir: I am sorry to hear that your cold is obstinate, and your indisposition continues.

If it will permit you to give a little attention to the Virginia Address, today, that it may be dispatched by the Post of tomorrow, I would thank you.

In the moment I received it, I sketched something by way of an answer, but whether I have therein said too much, or too little for the circumstances attending the Address, or whether those circumstances ought to have the least influence in the reply (notwithstanding as you will perceive by the Gazette enclosed, and which I request may be returned, what the temper of the State is, relative to the Administration) is problamatical: Therefore, and because you are better acquainted with the Legislature and politics of Virginia than I am I would be guided by your advice, and accordingly, if your health will allow it, I should be obliged to you for an entire new draught of an answer, or such unreserved corrections of the one sent as you

may think is perfectly applicable to the case, civil and unexceptionable. I wish you better health and am your sincere friend and Affectionate Servant.

P. S. If you are unable to attend to this matter, pray send the papers back by the bearer.[87] [N. Y. P. L.]

*To JOHN CAREY[88]

Philadelphia, December 30, 1796.

Sir: I have received your letters of the 8th. and 9th. of September and first of October.[89]

I am much indebted to you for the interest you feel, to have the imposition that has been attempted upon the public, detected. With great truth you pronounced it such. I shall leave something on this subject, to be used when I shall be permitted to enjoy peace and repose.

In the mean while I pray you to accept of my thanks for your present, and believe me to be Sir etc.

To THE SENATE

United States, January 4, 1797.

Gentlemen of the Senate: I lay before you, for your consideration, a treaty which has been negociated and concluded on,

[87] Lee's answer bears date of December 28: "The alteration is made conformably to your suggestion. The address seems to me to have been studiously intended to prevent a proper expression of sentiments and a respect to yourself seemed to require that nothing beyond mere civility should be found in the answer. The people of Virginia are deluded by designing leaders and infatuated with whatever concerns france; but I yet hope they will ere long see things in a better light." The Virginia Legislature's address and Washington's noncommittal reply, which is dated December 27, are entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*. A press copy of the reply is also in the *Washington Papers*. It is printed by Sparks, vol. 12, p. 236.

[88] Of London.

[89] Carey's letters of September 8 and October 1 are in the *Washington Papers*. The latter is indorsed by Washington: "with the Critical review for September 1796." This issue contained a review of the 1796 reprint of the Spurious Letters: (*Epistles Domestic, Confidential, and Official, from General Washington*) which was unsparing in its castigation of the forgeries.

the twenty ninth day of June last, by Benjamin Hawkins, Andrew Pickens, and George Clymer, Commissioners, on behalf of the United States, with the Creek Indians, together with the Instructions which were given to the said Commissioners and the proceedings at the place of Treaty.

I submit also the proceedings and result of a Treaty held at the City of New York on behalf of the State of New York with certain Nations or Tribes of Indians denominating themselves the Seven Nations of Canada.[90]

*To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

(Private)

January 4, 1797.

Dear Sir: As it is very desirable that the papers respecting the discontents of France should be got into Congress, and sent also to Mr. Pinckney as soon as possible; if you mean to give the other Gentleman a perusal of the statement for the latter, it would save time if this was done as you are proceeding towards the close of that Statemt.[91]

It is questionable whether the present, and pressing avocations of the other two Secretaries will allow them to go carefully over it; but this, I conceive, does not apply to the Attorney-General.

I have no doubt that you have taken care, and will continue to be assured, of your facts; for as this business will certainly come before the public, not only the facts, but the candour also, the expression, and force of every word, will be examined with the most scrutinizing eye, and compared with everything that will admit of a different construction, and if there is the

[90] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[91] See message to the Senate and the House of Representatives, Jan. 19, 1797, *post*.

least ground for it, we shall be charged with unfairness, and an intention to impose on, and to mislead the public judgment.

Hence, and from a desire that the statement may be full, fair, calm and argumentative; without asperity, or anything more irritating in the comments, than the narration of facts, which expose unfounded charges and assertions, do themselves produce, I have wished that this letter to Mr. Pinckney may be revised over, and over again. Much depends upon it, as it relates to ourselves, and in the eyes of the world; whatever may be the effect as it respects the governing powers of France. I am etc.

*To JAMES ANDERSON

Philadelphia, January 8, 1797.

Mr. Anderson: Your letter of the 3d instant, and Mr. Pearce's of the same date, with the weekly reports, were received by me yesterday and I shall take notice of such parts of both as may require an expression of my sentiments thereon.

I consent to your commencing a distillary, and approve of your purchasing the Still, and entering of it. And I shall not object to your converting part of the Coopers shop at the Mill to this operation. It is to be wished however, that it could be nearer your own house, or at the Mansion house; for I fear *at the Mill,* idlers (of which, and bad people there are many around it) under pretence of coming there with grist could not be restrained from visiting the Distillery, nor probably from tempting the Distiller, nay more robbing the Still; as the Mill would always afford a pretext for coming to that place. If the advantages were certain, of wch. from want of experience in the business I have no adequate idea; I should have no objection to the building of a house for the purpose of distillation; and in that case (unless the house ought to be so situated as that water can be carried

through it) I should prefer for this purpose the point below your house at what used to be the ferry landing. There the house might be sunk so as to bring the surface of the earth on the North east and east end, nearly upon a level (or rather a foot below the plates) and this end, and side, might be done up with slabs from the Saw-pits, of which there ought to be many nailed (the sawed side inwards) to substantial Posts morticed into a square frame below, in order to prevent the earth which should be rammed around them, from falling in. The south front, and East end, might be boarded up with three quarter, or Inch plank in the usual manner, and covered in the first instance, at least, with lap boards, as any other roof would be. The earth by sinking the [illegible] in this manner after throwing enough up on the North side, and East end for filling in, and ramming behind the Slabs, being spread on the other side and end, would form a level sufficient for casks, or anything else to stand. On an examination of the ground, something more simple and less expensive even than this, might be found to answer. The situation on many accounts would be good. 1. because you would have it immediately under your own eyes, 2 because no body could have any pretext for coming to it but on real business, 3 because it wd. be convenient on acct. of the Hogs, as well as more secure, if they are to run at large; and 4 because every thing, might be brought to, or transported from it, by Water. I question too, whether the expence of such a building as I have described, would be *much* greater than what would necessarily attend making the alterations in the Cooper shop at the Mill, to accomodate this business.

If upon full consideration of this matter, you should be of the same opinion, and at the sametime are satisfied from *you own* experience, not from the theoretical calculations, that it can be carried on profitably, I authorise you to set the Carpenters about

getting the framing, and putting up such a building as I have described. In the execution of wch. do not crimp the matter, but rather look forward to an extension of the work, than narrow it to the views of the present moment.

As an expeditious, and cleanly mode of getting grain out of the Straw, is of the first importance to a farmer (especially in this country, where our wheat has so many enemies) I highly approve of your providing the materials for erecting a Threshing Machine in time, that the timber may be seasoning; but it will be time enough to put them together before next harvest, by which I think it probable that some improvement will be made on the one at Malborough; I know it is in contemplation.

I believe with you, that my stock of Hogs is inadequate, and I have no objection to your increasing of them by purchase, of a good sort; and approve of your buying half a dozen, or more cows, of a proper kind, and a Bull. A Mr. Gough near Baltimore has the imported breed, and sells them high; the Bulls especially; but I should not stand so much upon the price, provided the breed is to be depended upon.

I am sorry to find the Mill is unable to grind. What does the Negros do for want of Meal? Secure the cracks in the manner you have recommended, or any other, in the Walls of it, and without delay; lest they should give way, as was the case some years ago. "A stich in time," to make use of a homely proverb "will save nine."

My last letter (this day week) to Mr. Pearce, gave him my ideas fully with respect to the manner of opening the New road; but in case any circumstances may have prevented his communicating these to you, they are as follow, viz, If the large trees can be cut so low, and even off, as that a carriage will run smooth over them without jolting, I had no objection to his pursuing this method, instead of grubbing them up by the

Roots. I added, that although the whole road was to be opened 93 feet wide, I only required 20 or 24 of it directly in the middle, to be cleansed of every thing, and made perfectly easy and agreeable for carriages; but if ditched on each side, these ditches ought to be 33 feet, or the width of the whole road, apart. I expect however, that 'ere this, he has communicated these ideas to you; and turned over to you a long memorandum which I transmitted to him, of my views, soon after my return to this City in October. It will be necessary for your government in a variety of cases therein mentioned.

With respect to the clumps of Trees on the Northern part of the North Visto, it would certainly have been judicious, in the first clearing, to have left them on the knowls; but as that was not done; or rather as the whole was designed for trees seperated from each other; clumps can only be formed *now* from those parts which are thickest of trees, whether on knowls or otherwise; as it is not my wish to thin the ground too much of its growth.

The place where the Ice is deposited, was not intended originally, for that purpose; and it was my design when I was last home, to have marked out, and prepared another spot for an Ice house; but I found the Road, and other jobs would allow no time to execute it; and therefore I postponed the matter until a more convenient period. If the weather (as it threatens to do) shd. continue cold and freezing after you receive this letter, I would have you do what is proposed, that is, to put water upon the Ice. If it congeals and turns to a solid mass it will be fortunate; but whether it does or does not do this, I would have you, as long as Ice is to be had, and that in the house continues to sink, replenish it with more; keeping up the greater body of it you can, as long as the exterior resource will enable you to do it; for having the means of preserving fresh meat during the

Summer will be of immense importance to me, after I get settled at home. I forgot to mention it in time, and now I presume it is too late, that the wall all round, as the Ice was put in and rammed, ought to have been lined with straw, that is, straw to have been placed between the Ice and the wall 3 or 4 Inches thick, at least; for there it is the Ice begins always to dissolve first. After the house is filled, and before do not keep it close, for this also is injurious.

When you have taken an Inventory of every thing, examined the fields, and formed your plans, I shall expect to receive an acct. of them. I have provided five bushels of Clover Seed for the use of the Estate, which I shall send to Mt. Vernon so soon as the Water communication is uninterrupted by Ice. If there are any other Seeds, or things wanting, let me know it, that they may be provided and sent in due Season. Is rape seed desirable? if so how much would you want? It is dear here and probably (being imported) not very good. You talked of an early Potatoe.

I would not have the rotation (marked out for Dogue run farm) deviated from; except by planting the Indian Peas, if to be had, in what otherwise would be a naked fallow for Seeding wheat in Autumn, of the present year. Enquire if there is a probability of getting seed to that extent within reach of Mount Vernon; and let me know as soon as possible, as Mr. Landon Carter of Cleve, has promised to supply me with seed if I can not obtain it nearer home. this would be far to send for it.

The Gardener complains heavily of the injury which he sustains from my half wild, half tame Deer; and I do not well know what course to take, especially as the hard weather, if it continues, will make them grow more and more bold and mischievous. Two methods have occurred, one or both combined, *may, possibly,* keep them out of the Gardens and Lawns;

namely, to get a couple of hounds, and whenever they are seen in, or near those places, to fire at them with shot of a small kind that would make them smart, but neither kill or maim them. If this will not keep them at a distance, I must kill them in good earnest, as the lesser evil of the two.

In your next letter, give me the exact measurement of the chimney in the small dining room: that is, how wide and deep it is within the wood, or facing part; how much the slabs of stone on each side and at top, without the said wood, shews; what the size of the blocks or pedestals (of stone) are, on which these slabs stand; and what the length and breadth of the hearth (without the fire place) are. You will readily perceive that the object of this enquiry is to supply these with something else: exactness therefore, in the measurement, is indispensible. I am etc.

PS. Send me the size of the frame, from out to out, which contains the family picture of the Marquis de la Fayette in the parlour.

If Mr. Pearce should be still at Mount Vernon, tell him I sincerely wish him better health and every prosperity he can desire.

*To DAVID STUART

Philadelphia, January 8, 1797.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 18th Ulto. with its enclosures, came to hand in the usual course of the Post; but the pressure of public business has prevented my giving it an acknowledgment until now.

The first thing I shall do after I am settled at Mount Vernon, will be to adjust all my accounts of a private nature; the doing of which, as they ought, has been prevented by public avocations.

What effect Mr. Adets conduct has had, or will have on the public mind, you can form a better opinion of than me. One of

the objects which he had in view, (in timing the publication)[92] is too apparent to require explanation. Some of his own *zealots,* do not scruple to confess that, he has been too precipitate; and thereby injured the cause he meant to espouse; which is, to establish such an influence in this country as to sway the government, and control its measures. Evidences of this design are abundant, and new proofs are exhibiting themselves every day, to illustrate the fact; and yet, lamentable thought! a large party under real, or pretended fears of British influence, are moving heaven and earth to aid Him in these designs. It is a fact well known, for history proves it, that from the restless temper of the French, and the policy of that nation, they attempt openly, or covertly, by threats or soothing professions, to influence the conduct of most governments. That they have attempted it with us, a little time will shew; but finding a Neutral conduct had been adopted, and would not be relinquished by those who Administered the government, the next step, was to try the people; and to work upon them; several presses, and many Scribblers have been employed to emblazen the improper Acts of the British governmt. and its Officers, and to place them in all the most exagerated and odious points of view they were susceptible; to complain that there was not only a deficiency of friendship, but a want of justice also in the Executive, towards France, the cause of which, say they, is to be found in a predilection for Great Britain. This not working as well as was expected, from a supposition that there was too much confidence, and perhaps personal regard for the present Chief Magistrate and his politics, the batteries latterly have been levelled at him

[92] Sparks notes that this was probably the pamphlet which has just been issued in Philadelphia, published by Bache, entitled "Notes addressées par le Citoyen Adet, Ministre Plénipotentiare de la République Française près les États-Unis d'Amérique, au Secrétaire d'État des États-Unis." A copy is in the Library of Congress.

particularly and personally and although he is soon to become a private citizen, his opinions are to be knocked down, and his character reduced as low as they are capable of sinking it, even by resorting to absolute falsehoods. As an evidence whereof, and of the plan they are pursuing, I send you a letter from Mr. Paine to me,[93] Printed in this City and disseminated with great industry. Others of a similar nature are also in circulation.

To what lengths the French Directory will ultimately go, is difficult to say; but that they have been led to the present point by our own People, I have no doubt. Whether some, who have done this, would choose to accompany them any farther or not, I shall not undertake to decide. But I shall be mistaken if the candid part of my countrymen (although they may be under a French influence) do not see, and acknowledge, that they have imbibed erroneous impressions of the conduct of this government, towards France, when the communication which I promised at the opening of the Session and which will be ready in a few days, comes before the public. It will be seen, if I mistake not also that that country has not such a claim upon our gratitude as has been generally supposed; and that this country has violated no engagement with it; been guilty of no act of injustice towards it; nor have been wanting in friendship, where

[93] The letter, "Printed in this City and disseminated with great industry," was dated July 30, 1796, and published by Bache. It was republished in Dublin and London in 1797. It ended thus: "As to you, sir, treacherous in private friendship (for so you have been to me, and that in the day of danger) and a hypocrite in public life, the world will be puzzled to decide, whether you are an apostate or an impostor; whether you have abandoned good principles, or whether you ever had any." No copy of this pamphlet is now found in the *Washington Papers*.

Paine had accepted, effusively, the citizenship and title of *citoyen* of France and was elected to the national convention of that nation. Imprisoned by Robespierre, he, after his release (Sept. 20, 1795), wrote to Washington that "after you were informed of my imprisonment it was incumbent upon you to have made inquiry into the cause. . . . I cannot understand your silence upon that head upon any other ground than as *connivance* at my imprisonment. . . . I was imprisoned on the Ground of being born in England, and your silence in not enquiring into the Cause of that imprisonment and reclaiming me against it was tacitly giving me up. I ought not to have suspected you of Treachery, but . . . I must continue to think you treacherous till you give me cause to think otherwise." Paine's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

it could be rendered without departing from that Neutral station we had taken, and resolved to maintain.

Enclosed also, you will receive a production [94] of Peter Porcupine, alias Wm Cobbet.[95] Making allowances for the asperity of an Englishman; for some of his strong and coarse expressions; and a want of official information of many facts; it is not a bad thing.

I rejoice much to hear of Mrs. Stuarts restoration to health, and congratulate you, and her on it, and on the birth of a daughter. My best wishes attend her and the family, and with very great regard, etc. [H.S.P.]

*To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

(Private)

Monday, January 9, 1797.

Dear Sir: Not having seen the conclusion of your Statement for Genl. Pinckney (if completed), and not knowing in what manner you propose to sum it up; it has occurred to me that, closing with some such sentiments as the following, might not be improper.

That the conduct of the United States towards France has been, as will appear by the aforegoing statement, regulated by the strictest principles of Neutrality.

That there has been no attempt in the government, to violate our Treaty with that country. To weaken our engagements therewith. Or to withhold any friendship we could render consistent with the Neutrality we had adopted.

[94] Apparently was *A Letter to the Infamous Tom Paine, in Answer to His Letter to George Washington*, published in *Porcupine's Political Censor*, in December, 1796 (Philadelphia).

[95] William Cobbett, alias "Peter Porcupine."

That Peace has been our primary object, but so far has it been from inducing us to acquiesce in silence to the capturing of our Vessels; impressing our Seamen; or to the misconduct of the Naval, or other Officers of the British government, no instance can be produced of authenticated facts having passed unnoticed; and where occasion required it, without strong remonstrances.

That this government seeing no propriety in the measure, nor conceiving itself to be under any obligation to communicate to the Ministers of the French Republic all the unpleasant details of what had passed between it and the British Minister here, or with the Minister for foreign affairs at the Court of London on these accounts; conscious of its fair dealing towards all the Belligerent Powers; and wrapt up in its own integrity; it little expected (under the circumstances which have been enumerated) the upbraidings it has met with. Notwithstanding, it now is, as it always has been, the earnest wish of the government (and you cannot too strongly enforce it) to be on the best and most friendly footing with the Republic of France; and we have no doubt, after giving this candid exposition of facts, that the Directory will revoke the orders under which our Trade is suffering, and will pay the damages it has sustained thereby. Yours sincerely.

*To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

(Private)

Tuesday, January 11, 1797.

Dear Sir: I shall have occasion to write to Mr. Lear by tomorrow's Post, and would thank you to let me know (in a summary way) what money he has drawn on acct. of the

Arsenal on the Potomack; and what report he has made to the War Office of his proceeding in that business; for I shall take an occasion (as from myself) to ask him what has been done therein. Yours always[96]

To GEORGE WASHINGTON PARKE CUSTIS

Philadelphia, January 11, 1797.

Dear Washington: I hasten to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 7th instant, but which did not get to my hands until yesterday, and to express to you the sincere pleasure I feel in finding that I had interpreted some parts of your letter erroneously. As you have the best and most unequivocal evidence the case is susceptible of, that I have no other object in view by extending my cares and advice to you than what will redound to your own respectability, honor, and future happiness in life, so be assured, that while you give me reasons to expect a ready submission to my counsels, and while I hear that you are diligent in pursuing the means which are to acquire these advantages, it will afford me infinite gratification. Your last letter is replete with assurances of this nature; I place entire confidence in them. They have removed all the doubts which were expressed in my last letter to you, and let me repeat it again, have conveyed very pleasing sensations to my mind.

It was not my wish to check your correspondences, very far from it; for with proper characters (and none can be more desirable than with your papa and Mr. Lear) and on proper subjects, it will give you a habit of expressing your ideas upon all occasions with facility and correctness. I meant no more, by telling you we should be content with hearing from you once a week, than that these correspondences were not to be con-

[96] From a photostat in the *McHenry Photostats* in the Library of Congress.

sidered as an injunction or an imposition, thereby interfering with your studies or concerns of a more important nature. So far am I from discountenancing writing of any kind (except upon the principle above mentioned) that I should be pleased to hear, and you yourself might derive advantages from a short diary (recorded in a book) of the occurances which happen to you within your sphere. Trifling as this may appear at first view, it may become an introduction to more interesting matters. At any rate, by carefully preserving these, it would afford you more satisfaction in a retrospective view, that what you may conceive at present.

Another thing I would recommend to you, not because I want to know how you spend your money, and that is, to keep an account book, and enter therein every farthing of your receipts and expenditures. The doing of which would initiate you into a habit, from which considerable advantages would result. Where no account of this sort is kept, there can be no investigation; no corrections of errors; no discovery from a recurrence thereto, wherein too much, or too little, had been appropriated to particular uses. From an early attention to these matters, important and lasting benefits may follow.

We are well, and all unite in best wishes for you; and with sincere affection, etc.[97]

*To BENJAMIN WALKER

Philadelphia, January 12, 1797.

Dear Walker: Permit me once more to give you the trouble of forwarding the enclosed letters to their respective addresses. If you read the *Aurora* of this City, or those Gazettes which are under the same influence, you cannot but have perceived with

[97] From the printed text in Custis's *Recollections of Washington* (Philadelphia: 1861).

what malignant industry, and persevering falsehoods I am assailed, in order to weaken, if not destroy, the confidence of the Public.

Amongst other attempts to effect this purpose, spurious letters, known at the time of their first publication (I believe in the year 1777) to be forgeries, to answer a similar purpose in the Revolution, are, or extracts from them, brought forward with the highest emblazoning of which they are susceptible, with a view to attach principles to me which every action of my life have given the lie to. But *that* is no stumbling block with the Editors of these Papers and their supporters. And now, *perceiving* a disinclination on my part, perhaps *knowing,* that I had determined not to take notice of such attacks, they are pressing this matter upon the public mind with more avidity than usual; urging, that my silence, is a proof of their genuineness.

Although I never wrote, or ever saw one of these letters until they issued from New York, in Print;[98] yet the Author of them must have been tolerably well acquainted in, or with some person of my family, to have given the names, and some circumstances which are grouped in the mass, of erroneous details. But of all the mistakes which have been committed in this business, none is more palpable, or susceptible of detection than the manner in which it is said they were obtained, by the capture of my Mulatto Billy, with a Portmanteau. *All the Army,* under my immediate command, could contradict this; and I

[98] This new edition of the spurious letters first published in America by James Rivington in New York, 1778, from the London publication of J. Bew, made its appearance in 1796 under the following title: *Epistles domestic, confidential, and official, from General Washington, written about the commencement of the American contest, when he entered on the command of the Army of the United States. . . . New York: Printed by G. Robinson . . . and J. Bull and sold by James Rivington . . .* MDCCXCVI. Many genuine papers were incorporated in this 1796 publication, along with the forged letters published in 1778. (See Washington's letter to Lund Washington, June 12, 1776, in vol. 5, p. 126, and footnote thereto.)

believe most of them know, that no Attendant of mine, or a particle of my baggage ever fell into the hands of the enemy during the whole course of the War.

It would be a singular satisfaction to me to learn, who was the Author of these letters; and from what source they originated.[99] No person in this country can, I conceive, give this information but Mr. Rivington: If, therefore, you are upon terms of familiarity with that Gentleman, and see no impropriety in hinting this desire to him, it would oblige me. He may comply to what extent his own judgment shall dictate, and I pledge my honor that, nothing to his disadvantage, or the disadvantage of any of the Actors at that time, shall result from it.

I offer the compliments of the Season, and you will do me the justice to believe they are warmer than the weather, to Mrs. Walker and yourself, of whose health and happiness we shall always be glad to hear. I am &c.

To THE PENNSYLVANIA SENATE

[January 13?, 1797.]

Gentlemen: I receive with great pleasure the expressions of your approbation of my public services. The general marks of satisfaction, and the various testimonies of select and discerning bodies of men among my fellow-citizens, respecting my public conduct, while they have stimulated my exertions to be

[99] So far as is known this "singular satisfaction" was denied Washington, although William Carmichael knew of the source as early as 1777. According to the *Deane Papers* (New York Historical Society), vol. 2, p. 75, Carmichael wrote on June 20 of that year from Paris to C. W. F. Dumas that it was "A junto of refugees from various parts of the continent, who meet daily in Pall Mall, London, to do this dirty work of government to earn the pittance but scantily afforded to each of them. At the head of this junto were [Thomas] Hutchinson, [Rev. Myles] Cooper, [John] Chandler, [John] Vassel, and others who would not be named but for their infamy. They have forged letters lately under the name of Gen. Washington, which the good, silly souls of Europe will swallow as genuine, unless contradicted in different gazettes."

useful to my Country, the sole object of all my aims and wishes, have also enforced the justness of your remark, That the most effectual method of securing the confidence and accomplishing the welfare of an enlightened nation, is to pursue, with undeviating firmness, a policy founded in pure integrity. And I shall be pardoned when I add, that conscious integrity has been my unceasing support; and while it gave me confidence in the measures I pursued, the belief of it, by acquiring to me the confidence of my fellow-citizens, ensured the success which they have had. This consciousness will accompany me in my retirement: without it, public applauses could be viewed only as proofs of public error, and felt as the upbraidings of personal demerit. In this retirement, to *behold* the national felicity, will be largely to partake in it; and if with this felicity I enjoy health, which you kindly wish me, my hopes in this world will be consummated.[1]

*To TOBIAS LEAR

Philadelphia, January 13, 1797.

My dear Sir: It is nearly, if not quite a month, since I enclosed you a letter from the Revd. Mr. Van Vleck, agreeing to take Colo. Ball's daughter, along with Maria.

In that letter, he mentioned his terms; his wishes to know their exact ages; and informed you what necessaries they ought to come provided with. To these I *added,* that knowing many unsuccessful attempts had been made to get girls admitted to that School, the reception of Maria and her Cousin ought to be considered as a favor; and hoped that Colo. Ball would be pointed in complying with the terms, and requisitions. I requested too, that you would write Mr. Van Vleck (I think I

[1]The draft is in the writing of Timothy Pickering, with some changes by Bartholomew Dandridge.

added under cover to me) the precise time the girls were to enter. Since then I have heard nothing from you, on this subject.

That letter was accompanied with Fulton's treatise (quarto) on the improvement of Canal Navigation, which I meant to deposit in your hands until my return to Mount Vernon. No acknowledgement of this neither, leads me to apprehend a miscarriage of them; and is the cause of these details.

Another subject indeed, has stimulated the present address. I have been asked, with a degree of solicitude from the War Office, to what cause is to be ascribed the non-execution, or not coming forward of the Deeds for the land, on which the Arsenal on Shanondoah is to be erected, as these were promised in a letter from you, dated early in August; since which, nothing has been communicated, and is embarrassing to that Department; as the necessary items, and information, cannot accompany the accounts of it, in the manner that is expected. On many accounts, I hope this matter will come forward without delay and particularly for the reasons I have mentioned. With sincere esteem etc.

*To JOHN TRUMBULL

Philadelphia, January 13, 1797.

Dear Sir: Enclosed you will receive Mrs. Washington's thanks for the many marks of politeness she has received from you; permit me to say, that she has expressed my sentiments fully; and to add, that you will do me a favour in causing the letter, herewith, to be sent to its address. It will always give me pleasure to hear of your welfare, for I am truly, and sincerely, etc.[2]

[2]Martha Washington's letter (January 12) is entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*. It thanked Trumbull for "a proof print, engraved from the whole length portrait of the President."

*To GOVERNOR JOHN HENRY[3]

January 13, 1797.

Dear Sir: For want of a Memo. from the Overlooker of my Carpenters (which I thought I had brought with me from Mount Vernon) I am unable to furnish an accurate Bill of the Plank and Scantling my purposes require; but as the former of these never comes amiss to me, I would engage

5000. feet of Inch
2500 Do of 1¼ and As free as possible from Sap.
1000. Do of 1½

And should be glad to know from the person in whom you could most confide, whether upon receiving a Bill of Scantling and an additional qty. of Plank, after I return home, I could be supplied therewith, delivered at Mount Vernon, and in how short a time after receiving the said Bill. With very great esteem etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

*To GEORGE DUNNINGTON

Philadelphia, January 15, 1797.

Sir: I have waited (perhaps with more forbearance than I ought) to see, if without an application on my part, you would come forward with the Rents you owe me.

As you have not done this, and no intimation of your intention to do it; and as it is not unfair to conclude from hence, that you mean to postpone the payment of them until the price of Tobo. is at a low ebb, and then to discharge the whole in *that* article, or at the price it bears in the Market; a practice not to be justified under *any* circumstances, much less in yours, who pay a Rent quite inadequate to the use of the land. I am constrained,

[3] Of Maryland.

tho' reluctantly, to inform you, that if you do not pay *all* that is due to me up to the commencement of the present year to Doctr. Jenifer of Port Tobacco (who will receive the same, and give a discharge therefor on my behalf) I shall take the most efficatious, and summary method, allowed by the Laws of Maryland, to obtain justice. I wd. fain avoid this appeal, but If I am obliged to resort to it, remember that it is brought upon you by your own default. I am etc.

To THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

United States, January 19, 1797.

Gentlemen of the Senate and of the House of Representatives: At the opening of the present Session of Congress I mentioned that some circumstances of an unwelcome nature had lately occurred in relation to France; that our trade has suffered and was suffering extensive injuries in the West Indies from the Cruisers and Agents of the French Republic; and that communications had been received from its Minister here which indicated danger of a further disturbance of our commerce by its authority, and that were in other respects far from agreeable: but that I reserved for a special message a more particular communication on this interesting subject. This communication I now make.

The complaints of the French Minister embraced most of the transactions of our Government in relation to France from an early period of the present War; which therefore it was necessary carefully to review. A collection has been formed of Letters and papers relating to those transactions which I now lay before you, with a letter to Mr. Pinckney, our Minister at Paris, containing an examination of the notes of the French Minister,

and such information as I thought might be useful to Mr. Pinckney in any further representations he might find necessary to be made to the French Government.[4] The immediate object of his mission was to make to that Government such explanation of the principles and conduct of our own, as by manifesting our good faith might remove all jealousy and discontent, and maintain that harmony and good understanding with the French Republic which it has been my constant solicitude to preserve. A Government which required only a knowledge of the *truth* to justify its measures, could not but be anxious to have this fully and frankly displayed.[5]

To JOHN GREENWOOD

Philadelphia, January 20, 1797.

"Send me some spiral spring, about a foot long, without cutting them, and join to this nearly double that length of gold wire, (little breaking) of a diameter that you judge suitable for me to attach them as customary, to my tooth."[6]

*To JOHN GREENWOOD

Philadelphia, January 20, 1797.

Sir: I must again resort to you for assistance. The teeth herewith enclosed have, by degrees, worked loose and, at length, two or three of them have given way altogether. I send them to you to be repaired, if they are susceptible of it; if not, then for the purpose of substituting others. I would thank you for, returning them as soon as possible for although I now make use

[4] The collection of letters and papers submitted to Congress with this message is printed in full in the *Annals of Congress*, 4th Congress, 2d Sess., Appendix, col. 2713 *et seq.*

[5] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[6] From a copy kindly furnished by Dr. B. W. Weinberger, of New York. The original was sold at auction in 1841.

of another sett, they are both uneasy in the mouth and bulge my lips out in such a manner as to make them appear considerably swelled.

You will perceive at the first view, that one cause of these teeth giving way is for want of a proper socket for the root part of them to rest in, as well for the purpose of keeping them firm and in place at bottom, as to preserve them against the effect of the saliva, which softens the part that formerly was covered by the gums and afforded them nourishment. Whether this remedy can be applied to the present sett I know not; for nothing must be done to them which will, in the *least* degree force the lips out more than *now* do, as it does this too much already; but if both upper and lower teeth were to incline inwards more, it would shew the shape of the mouth better, and not be the worse in any other respect.

Send with the teeth, springs about a foot in length, but not cut; and about double that length of a tough gold wire, of the size you see with the teeth, for fastening the springs. Accompany the whole with your Account, and the amount shall be immediately sent by Post in a bank note. I am etc.[7]

*To RICHARD PETERS

Philadelphia, January 21, 1797.

Dear Sir: I have received with much pleasure, your Agricultural enquiries on Plaister of Paris; and thank you for the honor of, and the affectionate sentiments contained in, the Dedication.

I shall be obliged by your furnishing me with two or three more copies of them, one of which I will send by the first opportunity to my Correspondent, and zealous supporter of Agriculture, Sir John Sinclair.

With sentiments of very great esteem etc. [H. S. P.]

[7] From a photostat in the "Washington Photostats" in the Library of Congress.

*To ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Philadelphia, January 22, 1797.

My dear Sir: Your letter of the 19th instant was received yesterday. From the general impression on my mind, relative to the Mr. De Neuvilles claim on the justice of this country, a delay, or a refusal to administer it, would be hard; but I must add, that I am too little acquainted with the particulars to form a correct opinion, and were it otherwise, I do not see how I could, with propriety, appear directly or indirectly in the business, as I do not recollect having had any agency therein. The numberless applications of this sort which are made to me (often in the dernier resort) without the means of relief, are very distressing to my feelings.

The conduct of France towards the United States, is, according to my ideas of it, outrageous beyond conception: not to be warranted by her treaties with us; by the Law of Nations; by any principle of justice; or even by a regard to decent appearances. From considerations such as these something might have been expected; but on her professions of friendship and loving kindness toward us I built no hope; but rather supposed they would last as long, and no longer, than it would accord with their interest to bestow them; or found it would not divert us from the observance of that strict neutrality, which we had adopted, and was persevering in.

In a few days, there will be published a statement of facts, in a letter with references, to General Pickney [*sic*]; containing full answers to all the charges exhibited in M. Adets notes, against the conduct of this government. After reading them with attention, I would thank you for your sentiments thereon, fully, and frankly communicated; and what you think ought

further to be attempted, to preserve this country in Peace, consistently with the respect which is due to ourselves?

In some of the Gazettes, and in conversation also, it is suggested that an Envoy extraordinary ought to be sent to France; But is not General Pinckney gone there already for the express purpose of explaining matters, and removing inquietudes? With what more could another be charged? What would that Gentleman *think* of having a person treading on his heels by the time he had arrived in Paris, when the arguments used to induce him to go there are all that could be urged to influence that other? and where is the character to be had, admitting the necessity, in all respects, acceptable and qualified for such a trust? The sooner you can give me your sentiments on these queries the more pleasing will they be to Dear Sir, &c.[8]

*To THE SPEAKER OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES[9]

United States, January 24, 1797.

Sir: I acknowledge the receipt of your obliging favour of the 20th of the last month, covering the Resolutions of the House of Representatives of the State of South Carolina of the preceeding day.

The sense the House have been pleased to express of my public services, the declaration of their affectionate attachment, and their kind wishes for my happiness, are for those services the most grateful reward.

While I enjoy the personal satisfaction which the general sentiment of approbation expressed by my country cannot fail

[8] From the *Hamilton Papers* in the Library of Congress.
[9] Robert Barnwell.

to produce, I derive from it, as a citizen of the United States, the greatest pleasure; as it authorises the conclusion that the important measures of their Government have been calculated to promote their true and permanent interests, which are inseperately connected with rectitude of principle and impartial justice to other Nations.

You will have the goodness to communicate to the House of Representatives these sentiments, with my sincere acknowledgments for the marks of attention with which they have honoured me. Your individual and affectionate Solicitude for my happiness is entitled to my cordial thanks.

*To JOHN GREENWOOD

Philadelphia, January 25, 1797.

Sir: Your letter of the 23d. instt. came to me this morning.

The tooth that formerly went into the hole (that is now filled up) has been out many months; which was the cause for puting in the artificial one. If it was not sent with the rest, I know not what has become of it; nor is it material, as the one which supplies its place answers the purpose very well.

Not knowing whether you mean to make a new sett, or to repair the old, I must again caution you against adding any thing that will widen the bars on the sides, or extend them in front at bottom. They are already too wide, and too projecting for the parts they rest upon; which causes both upper, and under lip to bulge out, as if swelled. By filing these parts away

On January 24 Washington wrote a similar, but shorter, letter to David Ramsay, president of the Senate of South Carolina, acknowledging their unanimous resolve of January 19. A press copy of this is in the *Washington Papers*. The resolutions of both the Senate and the House of South Carolina are entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

On January 25 Washington also wrote to Gov. Samuel Ashe, of North Carolina, acknowledging in similar terms an address of the General Assembly. A press copy of this is in the *Washington Papers*.

(to remedy that evil) it has been one cause of the teeth giving way, having been weakened thereby. I am etc.[10]

*To GEORGE WALKER

Philadelphia, January 26, 1797.

Sir: Your letter of the 24th instt. was received this day. It was not, I conceive, the intention of the Law which established the seat of the general government, that the President of the United States should enter into the detail of the business for the execution of which Commissioners were appointed. But it certainly is his duty, when charges of Malpractice, or improper conduct are exhibited against them, to cause the charges to be fairly examined. This I shall do; in the first instance, by transmitting a copy of your letter, that they may severally know, of what they are accused; that, from the answers I shall receive, ulterior measures may be decided on.

This is the line of conduct I have always pursued. For, as I never, on the one hand, suffer information unfavourable to the character, or conduct of public Officers (who are amenable to the Executive) to pass unnoticed; so, on the other, from motives of delicacy as well as justice, I have conceived it proper to hear, always, what they have to say in their justification before a more formal investigation takes place.

With respect to the residence of the Commissioners in the City, they are perfectly well informed of the sentimts. of the Executive on that head; and it is not to be doubted that they will conform thereto. With sincere thanks for yr. good wishes, I am etc.

[10] Greenwood has written and signed a certificate on the verso of this letter (Feb. 20, 1797), an extract of which is: "The Within letter whas rote by General Washington in Answer to one I had sent him in request to know if the tooth which I have now in possession whar in fact his own natural tooth which whar the onely one that remained in his head when I fixed him a Whole Compleat sett."

*To JAMES ANDERSON

Philadelphia, January 29, 1797.

Mr. Anderson: Your letter of the 25th instant with the Reports of the preceeding week came to hand by the mail of yesterday.

In Six weeks or thereabouts, if nothing unforeseen happens, I expect to be a resident at Mount Vernon; but lest something may cast up requiring the payment of ready money, I enclose you an order upon the Bank for Two hundred dollars. The general account therewith may be settled after my return, by which time Mr. Smith's note, at that place, will become due.

I expressed often, and in strong terms to Mr. Pearce, my wish that he would settle and pay all that was due *from* me; and either receive, or reduce to specialties, all that was owing to me; foreseeing what would happen if he did not. It is bad health, I presume, prevented him from doing it, and therefore you must persevere in the mode you have adopted to bring them to an equitable close, which is all I require.

The ideas which are expressed in your letter, relative to my business, are generally, very agreeable to me; and it is my desire that you would, always, and without reserve, do the like, as I like to hear opinions, and am always open to conviction, when there is reason to enforce it. The suggestions with respect to a change of the System at Dogue Run appears to me to be rational, and if any measures, necessary to carry it into effect, must be taken before I return, I do not object thereto: afterwards, I can converse with you on the subject more fully, and on that of hedging and ditching also, than which, nothing, in that line, is more desirable.

Two causes have prevented me from turning my attention to Orchards, viz, frequent, and long absences from home, and the

unfavourableness of the Soil on wch. they have, hitherto, been attempted, particularly for apples. Notwithstanding these unsuccessful attempts, I consent readily, to your appropriating the ground by your house to Peaches; perhaps others also; upon proper investigation of circumstances.

I have always had an eye to some of the Inlets at Union farm for meadow; but it has so happened, that work more pressing, or the want of a proper arrangement of it, has been the means of postponing it. Whenever it can be undertaken with propriety, my consent and wishes will accompany the measure.

If upon a thorough examination of the Seins, it should be thought advisable to provide a new one, I shall not object to it: but in this instance, as in all others, I recommend frugality and œconomy, for their is no adage more true, than that "a penny saved, is a penny got."

Mrs. Washington approves of what you have done to the meat, in the Cellar, and trusts to your management of it until her arrival; as I shall do to your having Beef, mutton &ca. in good order, for my table, when I return. The disposition of all the Beef cattle over that, under the circumstances you have described, ought to be disposed of, to save the consumption of corn; which should be husbanded as much as possible.

By the next Post I will myself write to Mr. Gough to let me know whether he can spare me some of his best breed of Horned Cattle, and on what terms; and you shall be informed of the result; as also whether he has any good Rams to dispose of. His sheep are, I believe, of the broad tail kind, better it is said for Mutton than for their Wool.

I would, by all means, have proper scantling provided for a Wheat Machine, but not put together until the improvmts. on the sort now in use, is better understood than at present; and then to pay a workman who thoroughly understands the business rather than to attempt doing it myself, imperfectly.

The Mill race wants much to be cleared out, and widened; It wants a waste also at Pools run to prevent the frequent breaches in it by heavy rains; but the Mill will never be regularly supplied with water (especially in the Summer Season) until the new part of it is completed; and radical repairs given to some parts below the run just mentd.

If feeding the Deer will not divert them from their mischievous tricks, they must, after I come home, be killed, unless the fear of hounds would keep them at a distance.

If after the ground is uncovered, you should find that the Wheat and clover is left bare at Root; I hope you will apply the Rollers to them, when the ground is in a proper state to receive them. Colo. Deakins of George Town, has given me reason to expect ten or a dozen bushels of Oats (for Seed) from the Glades beyond the Alligany Mountains, of a quality, it is said, inferior to none in the world. I do not much depend upon them; but it may not be amiss, notwithstanding, to enquire after them before Seed time.

I am unlucky in the loss of Mules; not less than five or Six within two, or at most three years, have died by violent means.

The Potatoes and Turnips necessary for your own Table, you are very welcome to, without charging yourself with them. I am etc.

*To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, January 29, 1797.

Gentlemen: Having received a letter from Mr. George Walker, of which a copy is enclosed, with my answer; a sense of duty to the public, and of propriety as it relates to yourselves; requires the transmission of both, to you; for the purpose which is expressed in the latter.

After the severe weather we have had, I think it probable there will be an early Spring: In which event, I persuade myself that great exertions will be used to forward the Capitol in preference to any other object. All others indeed depend, in a high degree, thereon, and are, or ought to be, subordinate thereto. As well therefore with a view to remove those unhappy jealousies (which have had a baneful influence on the affairs of that City) as to invigorate the operations on that building, I cannot too often, nor too strongly enjoin it upon those who have not already taken their stands in the City, to do it without delay; and as convenient to the important theatre, as they can be accommodated.

It may be relied on, that even among the best disposed friends to the Act for establishing the seat of government, on the Potomac, there are many who intermix doubts with anxiety, lest the principal building should not be in a situation to accommodate Congress by the epoch of their removal; and it is not less certain, that private buildings (wch are essential for the accommodation of their members) will progress no faster than the other: nay less, as buildings around the Capitol will be erected principally by the wealthy, by those who would take in boarders, and by Shop-keepers; the whole of these, more than probable, will wait until the accomplishment of the first (the prospect of it I mean) is reduced to a moral certainty.

It is not only of infinite importance therefore to make all other measures yield, in *reality* to this, but in *appearance* also; especially, under the present difficulty of obtaining loans, and the uncertainty of your funds; which *must* depend upon public opinion, and the confidence which is placed in the administration of them. To what I have here said, I shall only add the esteem and regard of Gentlemen Your etc.[11]

[11] From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

*To WILLIAM BLOUNT AND WILLIAM COCKE

February 1, 1797.

Gentlemen: Some days ago I recd a letter from you with enclosures, recommending John Rhea Esqr. for District Judge, of the District of Tennessee. The Act for establishing that Office, having now obtained all the requie. forms, the nomination of a character to fill it has become necessary: but before I proceed to it, I wish to know what specific objections, if any, there are to Mr. Dd. Campbell,[12] who has been one of the Judges under the authority of the United States for that District since the establishment of the Government therein; who came very highly recommended to me for his *integrity* and *fit* abilities for that office, and against whom, no impeachment of his conduct has come to my knowledge. With respect I am etc.

*To ALEXANDER SPOTSWOOD

Philadelphia, February 1, 1797.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 24th. Ulto. was received by yesterday's Post, and for the information it contains I pray you to accept my thanks; As I do also of the kind offer you have made me of enquiring into the quality and value of the land I hold on rough creek in the State of Kentucky which I readily accept.

I have heard through other channels, that the above mentioned Land is possessed of valuable properties; and I authorised Major George Lewis to buy the small tract adjoining; belonging to Mr. Wodrow, on my account, but it is not within my recollection, at this moment, what the final result has been. Let me ask you, therefore, to converse with him on this subject, and to pursue such measures respecting it, in my behalf,

[12] David Campbell.

as you two shall conclude will be beneficial for me. I will follow your advice, and not dispose of the land until I receive your report respecting it, if that shall happen in any reasonable time.

Upon examination, I find I have not General Lee's Conveyances of the Land to me, at this place, of course I cannot possess you of them: nor do I believe it is necessary, as Colo. Thomas Marshall, of Kentucky, has, on my behalf, paid the taxes of those lands from the first assessment of them (as I have accounts to shew) to a certain period; and was requested to do it regularly onwards, which I am persuaded he has done or is ready to do. I will request the favor of you, however, while you are in that country; to enquire into the matter and see that I have justice done me; as there has been no remissness on my part, or intention to withhold the Tax, from the State.

I sincerely wish you a pleasant journey to Kentucky, and a safe return; and with the best regards of Mrs. Washington united to my own, for Mrs. Spotswood and the family I am etc.

*To GEORGE BALL

Philadelphia, February 1, 1797.

Sir: Your letter of the 16th. Ulto. has been recd.

If Mr. George Fitzhugh has given up the idea of purchasing my land in Gloucester County, I am willing that you should have it on the terms it has been offered to him. which are, for the nett sum it cost me, with interest thereon, from the date of my purchase to the date of my conveyance: one fourth of which to be paid at the signing of the Deed, the other three fourths in three annual payments, with interest.

Although the latter payments would be most agreeable to me, I should have no material objection to wait two years for the second fourth, and annually for the other two fourths; but

in either case interest (in order to make myself whole) will be expected.

If, Sir, you are desirous of closing the matter in a purchase it must not be delayed as others are expressing their wishes to deal for it. If nothing unforeseen prevents it, I shall certainly be at my Seat in Virga. by the 20th. of March, I expect to be there sooner, but would not calculate upon it. I am etc.

P. S. After the first payment, I have no objection to the Land as Security for the payment of the remaining three fourths.

*To THE DELAWARE SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES

United States, February 2, 1797.

Gentlemen: I receive with great satisfaction the Addresses of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the State of Delaware, which you have now presented to me, on the occasion of my contemplated retirement from the Presidency of the United States.

These evidences of their affection, and testimonies that my public Services have been useful to my country, will ever be dear to me.

If yielding to the calls of my fellow-citizens, I have renounced the ease and enjoyments of private life, to encounter the dangers and difficulties of the first and most arduous employments, it was because the sacrifices, on my part, were by them deemed interesting to their safety and welfare. Animated by such motives, and supported by the general spirit and patriotism of my countrymen, when the objects of my public agency were attained, nought remained to me but to seek again the private station which their partiality and confidence required me for a time to relinquish. In this chosen retirement, the approving

voice of my country will ever be a subject of grateful recollection; while I behold its increasing prosperity, under the influence of the same public spirit, energy, justice and moderation, in which its independence, character and credit have been founded. That such may be the fruit of our labours, and such the happy progress of our Republic, is, and ever will be, the object of my ardent wishes.

These sentiments, gentlemen, with my grateful acknowledgments to the Senate and the House of Representatives of the State of Delaware, I pray you to communicate to them in such manner as you shall deem proper.[13]

*To JAMES ANDERSON

Philadelphia, February 5, 1797.

Mr. Anderson: Your letter of the 1st instant, with the weekly reports, are received.

If all that part of the new road from the Causay to the White gates is completed and fit for use, it has gone on better than I expected; and makes me wish more, that the other part was done; that the *whole* might be fit for use against my return; but I do not desire it to be attempted to the injury of more important work.

When Davy is about the fencing at Muddy hole, let that part in which the gate is (going into the farm) be continued in a straight line, as it now runs, until it strikes the new road; and then in a parallel line therewith, until it joins the fence again on the hill, before it reaches the Causay; after which, to run as it now does towards No 6, whenever that part of it shall be repaired.

[13] A note from the Delaware delegation in Congress requesting an appointment with the President, for the purpose of presenting the address of the Delaware Legislature, is in the *Washington Papers*, under date of Feb. 1, 1797.

The method you propose, to get the Peas from Mr. Landon Carter, is much better than sending all the distance by land, in the state the roads now are, and will be until they are well settled after frosts are entirely over. But notwithstanding these Peas promised by that gentleman. I would not have you be too sanguine of the receipt of them, or less you should receive *from him positive* assurance thereof, the quantity, and when, and how they are to be obtained. Of course, it may not be amiss to devise, in time, what is to be done in case of failure.

I consent to your cultivating in Corn, the field at Dogue run which is mentioned in your letter; and leave the whole arrangement, of the crops at River farm to your own judgment, but you have not attended to the quantity in that part of No. [illegible] which lyes between the meadow, Mill road lane going into the Barn therefrom, if you suppose it contains 80 acres, it will amount to more than 60 at most.

In clearing that piece of Mill Swamp adjoining the Road (and I am glad you have undertaken it) do not thin it too much of single trees, thereby stripping it of both shade and ornament. I am perfectly satisfied of the great quantity of ground I have, capable of being converted into good meadow and have wished always to do it; but these wishes (and being so much from home) have outrun the means of accomplishment.

Grain harrowed in, certainly looks better in autumn, than that which is plowed; but in land which is apt to have (or spew as it is called) the mouldering of the ridges when ploughed, gives, as is supposed, fresh earth and nourishment to the roots and therefore is prefered by many farmers; experience only, in such soils, can alone decide the question.

I shall be able to ascertain upon good conjectural grounds what may be expected for flour and will let you know when,

and at what price to sell. In the meantime keep me advised of the prices of that article in Alexandria.

As Spades, Shovels, Scythes, Nails, Nail rods, Iron plates for the mould boards of Ploughs, Bar iron, and most other things could be had upon better terms here than in Alexandria, and as I must engage a vessel to carry my furniture round, let me know the quantity, and sorts of each of these articles that will be wanted, and any others, and I will endeavour to provide them. Do you not want Riddles for cleaning grain &ca.? how many and of what degrees of finess?

Send me the sizes of the four room on the lower floor (at Mount Vernon) which open into the passage.

Have you Buck wheat for Seed? although my attempts, hitherto, to raise it as a crop, and for a green dressing have never answered my expectations, yet I am very willing it should undergo further trials.

I think of nothing more, at present, necessary to add, but wishing you well in all your plans I remain etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

*To MATTHIAS SLOUGH

Philadelphia, February 6, 1797.

Dear Sir: The 3d. of March which is fast approaching, will put an end to my political career; and I shall have another to commence through mud and mire, to reach more tranquil scenes at Mount Vernon. This I shall do without delay, or attempt it at least, be the roads in what condition they may, at that time.

To enable me to accomplish this journey, with such baggage as I do not incline to risk by water, I shall want a pair of strong horses that are true and steady to the draught for a Waggon,

lighter than a Coachee, to carry some trunks (not heavy) at the rate we shall travel, which must be slow.

Would you oblige me so far as to make this purchase, and to have the horses in this City by the first day of March? I should prefer Mares, and wish them to match in (any) colour. They ought not to exceed Six, or at any rate seven years old next spring, nor ought they to be under fifteen hands high. As they will be put to the Plough, or Waggon, after I get them home. I should prefer cheapness to appearance; and the reason why I mention Mares instead of Geldings, is, that Mules may be bred from them afterwards, but I must take either.

Be so good as to let me know, without delay, whether I can, or cannot place certain dependence on you for the purchase, and having them here by the time before mentioned. The money shall be paid on delivery; or if required, shall be sent to you before, for the purpose of instant payment.

I will offer no apology for giving you this trouble, because I persuade myself you are disposed to serve me in it. With esteem etc.

PS. Let me request the favour of you to have the steadiness of the horses to the draught proved, before they are sent here; for to be plagued with them on the road would be dreadful.

[N.Y.P.L.]

*To MATTHIAS SLOUGH

Philadelphia, February 11, 1797.

Dear Sir: The enclosed is the copy of a letter I wrote you agreeably to the date; but as it was to take its chance from the stage office, and letters by private conveyances do not always get to their destination, I trouble you with a duplicate; as well on that account, as because I find my journey home requires the purchase of a third horse, or mare, for the draught.

This third one, must, in every respect, be conformable to the description of the last two except (as it is to go with three others which I have) that it ought to be a *bay*, and of some what better figure. For the reason mentioned in my last, I should prefer, greatly, Mares; and if they were to be here before the first of March (that they might be exercised together, and with breast plates instead of collars) it would be desirable.

At any rate let me hear from you as soon as convenient that I may know what to depend upon. With esteem etc. [N. Y. P. L.]

*To MATTHIAS SLOUGH

Philadelphia, February 13, 1797.

Dear Sir: On Saturday morning I wrote to you by the Post, and in the afternoon . . .[14] letter of the 10th instant.

Altho' I had not intended to have gone to the price of One hundred and Sixty pounds for a pair of Mares for the purpose for wch. those purchased were wanted, yet from . . . Kreamers account of them, . . . displeased that you made it, and thank you for doing so.

Enclosed, I send you Bank notes amounting Six hundred Dollars, to pay for . . . for the third one required, which (if obtained at all) I request may be . . . calculated for active movements than I presume the first two are. Whatever this sum shall fall short of the purchase and incidental expences will be immediately remitted to you, and I should be glad to . . . them here as soon as convenient. If a handsome bay horse, young and well broke to the draught, could readily be . . . are not so, I shall readily acquiesce. Although . . .

I pray you to accept my thanks for the readiness with which you have complied with my request and . . . assured of the esteem etc. [N. Y. P. L.]

[14] The press copy is mutilated. Words indicated by leaders [. . .] are illegible.

*To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Philadelphia, February 14, 1797.

Sir: I have given the draught of the letters to Messrs. Pinckney, Humphreys, and Adams an attentive perusal, and approve of their contents.

It might however be better, to soften some of the strong expressions in the letter which is addressed to the first of those characters; or to convey them in Cypher, lest they should (which is not improbable) fall into hands they are not intended for. and might it not be advisable to let Mr Pinckney know how unpleasant to this country it would be, that the French should be possessed of Louisiana and the Floridas, that he might act as opportunities and circumstances would justify?

It would seem that the same principle, which induced a call upon the Merchts. to come forward with their statements and proof of British Spoliations, apply equally to those who are suffering by French depredations; but as we may, every moment, expect to hear from Mr. Pinckney at Paris, I am inclined to think the call had better be suspended until it is known what his reception has been.[15]

*To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, February 15, 1797.

Gentlemen: Several of your letters have been received within these few days; and notwithstanding the accumulation of business, consequent of the near epoch for my quitting the chair of

[15] From a photostat of the original from *Miscellaneous Letters* in the Department of State, kindly furnished by Carlton Savage, historical director of that department.

government, the receipt of them should not have remained so long unacknowledged had I not placed such as related to the Power of Attorney, and to some disputed points, into the hands of the Law Officer of the United States for his official opinion; without having received his report; owing, I believe, to his having been hurried, almost, as much as myself.

Thus circumstanced, I shall confine the subject of this letter wholly to the expression of my sentiments relatively to the public buildings; conceiving it necessary that you should be informed of them without delay.

When in the course of the Autumn you suggested the propriety of designating the sites for the Executive Offices, and for providing materials for their erection, I yielded a ready assent; and still think that if we had the means at command, and no doubt was entertained of the adequacy of them, that these buildings ought to commence.

But, when the difficulty in obtaining loans; and the disadvantageous terms on which the money is borrowed, has since become so apparent; when I see those whose interest it is to appreciate the credit of the City, and to aid the Commissioners in all their laudable exertions brooding over their jealousies, and spreading the Seeds of distrust; and when I perceive (as I clearly do) that the public mind is in a state of doubt, if not in despair of having the principal building in readiness for Congress, by the time contemplated; for these reasons I say, and for others which might be enumerated, I am now decidedly of opinion that the edifices for the Executive Offices ought to be suspended; that the work on the house for the President should advance no faster (at the expence or retardment of the Capitol) that is necessary to keep pace therewith; and to preserve it from injury; and that all the means (not essential for other

purposes) and all the force, ought to be employed on the Capitol.

It may be relied on, that it is the progress of that building, that is to inspire, or depress public confidence. Under any circumstances this, more or less would be the case; but when it is reported by many, and believed by some (without foundation I am persuaded) that there is a bias elsewhere; it is essential on the score of policy, and for the gratification of the public wishes, that this work should be vigorously prosecuted in the manner I have suggested. And I require it accordingly. Consider'd in a simple point of view, the matter stands thus. Are the funds sufficient to accomplish *all* the objects which are contemplated? If doubts arise, then, which of those objects are to be preferred? on this ground there would be but one opinion; every body would cry out, the Capitol. Again, admit that the resources will ultimately be adequate, but cannot be drawn forth in the ratio of your general wants, will not the same answer, as it respects time, apply with equal force to the building just mentioned? This then, seems to be safe ground to proceed on. It would gratify the public wishes and expectation; might, possibly, appease clamour; and, if all the buildings cannot be completed in time, no material evil would result from the postponement of the subordinate Offices, until the Capitol is in such a state of forwardness as to remove all doubts of its being ready for the reception of Congress by the time appointed. Another good (mentioned in a former letter) would flow therefrom; which is, that in proportion as that building advanced, and doubts subsided, private buildings would be erected where they would be most wanted for the accommodation of the members. The public offices might shift (as they have done) a while longer. I write in much haste (for this morning's Post) that the letter may get to you in the course of the

week. If I have expressed myself in such a manner as to be clearly understood it is enough you must excuse the scrawl, and believe me to be, with esteem, &c.[16]

*To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, February 17, 1797.

Gentlemen: In looking over the press copy of the letter I wrote you by the Post of Wednesday last, which was penned in great haste, to be in time for the Mail; I perceive some ambiguity in the expression of my sentiment respecting the building designated for the President of the U. States; and therefore these lines are given in explanation.

It was not, nor is it my intention, that the work on that house should cease; for that might prove injurious to the parts that are already executed, and to the materials which are prepared for the completion of the Walls and covering the same. The idea I meant to convey was, that these should go on, but with as moderate means as would accomplish the object, and guard the edifice from damage by weather; employing the *remaining* force on the Capitol; resting the matter upon a little time, and the prospect of your funds, to determine, unequivocally, whether *both* buildings can be completed by the year 1800: and until this is ascertained, to proceed on the Capitol in the manner, and for the purposes I have mentioned to you before.

It has been advised, that an Act of Congress should be obtained for incorporating the Commissioners of the City of Washington, and their successors, for the particular purpose of enabling them to take and hold in fee simple for the use of

[16] From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

the United States, the lands within the City, set apart and appropriated by the President to their use.

It is supposed possible that some inconvenience may arise at a future day if the conveyance be made to any persons and their heirs in their individual capacity, by reason of their absence, infancy, or other unforeseen causes which will not occur in case the Commissioners are incorporated and the conveyance is made to them. A bill for this purpose is now before Congress and expected to pass. So soon as a decision is had upon it a direction will be sent for a conveyance of those appropriated lands to be made to the Commissioners if incorporated; if not then to the same persons in their individual capacity.

At the sametime, perhaps sooner, I will give you my sentimts. on the Memorial of Mr. Davidson,[17] and other matters. In the meantime, with esteem etc.[18]

To THE PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

February 17, 1797.

Gentlemen: The kindness of my fellow Citizens has given me frequent occasion to make my acknowledgments for their expressions of confidence, attachment and affection; and for their honourable testimonies that my public cares and labours have been useful to my Country.

With great satisfaction I receive your additional testimonies, that as a public man I have not lived in vain.

Though now seeking that repose which retirement and the tranquil pursuit of rural affairs are calculated to afford, and which my time of life requires, the love of my Country will indeed suffer no abatement: its safety and prosperity will be

[17] Samuel Davidson.

[18] From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

essential to the enjoyment of my remaining years. And I confide in the discernment and patriotism of my fellow Citizens for the choice of wise and virtuous men who will successively administer every branch of the Government in such manner, as under divine providence, to enforce the general happiness.

For your affectionate wishes for my present and future happiness, accept, Gentlemen, my cordial thanks.[19]

*To JOSEPH FAY

Philadelphia, February 19, 1797.

Sir: Your favor of the 7th. instant came duly to hand, but a pressure of business, has retarded the acknowledgement of it.

My lands on the Ohio and great Kanhawa Rivers are not yet disposed of; nor do I incline to offer them for sale in Europe; where land jobbing is in much disgrace.

For some part of them (possessed of no peculiar advantages) I have refused eight dollars an acre, but have offered the *whole* of what I own on those two rivers at that price; a large proportion of which is of superior quality, and inferior in no other respect to those for which the offer was made.

The publication enclosed with this letter, gives a correct general description of the several tracts, where, and how situated. The quality, and value of them are so well known, that a more particular account might be had from any person who has ever been on the Ohio; and I had rather it should be derived from others, or from an occular view, than from any details of mine.

The price, as before mentioned, being Eight dollars, the printed notification designates the mode of payment and security thereof. I am etc.

[19] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
The original address from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives is dated February 17 and is in the *Washington Papers*.

*To THE VICE PRESIDENT

Monday, February 20, 1797.

Dear Sir: I thank you for giving me the perusal of the enclosed, The sentimts. do honor to the head and heart of the writer, and if my wishes would be of any avail they should go to you in a *strong hope* that you will not withhold merited promotion for Mr. John Adams [20] because he is your Son. For without intending to compliment the father or the mother, or to censure any others, I give it as my decided opinion that Mr. Adams is the most valuable public character we have abroad, and that he will prove himself to be the ablest of all our Diplomatic Corps.

If he was now to be brought into *that* line, or into any other public walk, I could not, upon the principle which has regulated my own conduct, disapprove the caution which is hinted at in the letter. But he is already entered; the public more and more, as he is known, are appreciating his talents and worth; and his country would sustain a loss if these are checked by over delicacy on your part. With sincere esteem and affectionate regard I am etc.

*To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, February 20, 1797.

Gentlemen: Reasons which I have frequently assigned, have prevented me from acknowledging sooner, the receipt of your letter of the 3d. instant; relatively to the Memorial of Mr. Davidson. Indeed I have so often expressed my unwillingness to depart from the engraved plan in any instance where it could

[20] John Quincy Adams.

be avoided, that I had hoped no repetition of this sort would have been made to you, by any of the Proprietors.

Whether the area in front of the building intended for the President of the United States be circular, according to Majr. L'Enfants plan, or square as the engraved one represents, is immaterial in the abstract, or as it concerns the Public and Mr. Davidson *only;* but if the gratification of that gentleman sets a principle afloat, and thereby opens a door to similar applications, it attaches an importance which may involve inextricable difficulties.

To what Mr. Davidson alludes in the scored part of the following sentence, "I can venture to assert that numberless deviations were made by Majr. Ellicott from the original plan, and *I have reason to believe that many have been made since"* you, much better than I, can explain. That many alterations have been made from Majr. L'Enfants plan by Majr. Ellicott, (with the approbation of the Executive) is not denied; that some were deemed essential is avowed; and had it not been for the materials which he happened to possess, 'tis probable no engraving from Majr. L'Enfants draught would ever have been exhibited to the public; for after the disagreement which took place between him and the late Commissioners, his obstinacy threw every difficulty it could, in the way of its accomplishment.

To this summary may be added, that Mr. Davidson is mistaken if he supposes, that the transmission of Majr. L'Enfants Plan of the City to Congress, was the completion thereof. So far from it, it will appear by the Message which accompanied the same that it was given as matter of information, to show in what state the business was in, and the return of it requested. That neither house of Congress passed any act consequent thereupon. That it remained as before, under the controul of the Executive. That afterwards, several errors were discovered and corrected, many alterations made, and the appropriations

(except as to the Capitol and Presidents house) struck out under that authority, before it was sent to the Engraver; intending *that* his work, and the promulgation thereof, were to give it the final, and regulating stamp.

I have been thus particular to show that Mr. Davidson is not treading on solid ground, or in other words, that he is claiming as a matter of right what can only be yielded on the principle of harmony, or for mutual benefit; and therefore, it only remains to be repeated, that if the proposed alteration would have a tendency towards inviting applications of a similar nature I shall be decidedly against the measure. If on the other hand, the case is singular, and no consequences would be involved in the acquiescence; as it is immaterial whether the area is semicircular or square; as contention may be avoided, and both parties, in a pecuniary point of view benefited, I leave the question, under the provisos before mentioned, to your own decision; as you must have a more comprehensive view of circumstances than I can acquire.

The other part of Mr. Davidson's memorial is yet more extraordinary; for if the Proprietors, in consideration of having the permanent Seat of the Government established among them, yielded a portion of their property for public uses, shall, afterwards, take upon themselves to decide what shall not be done with it, they may, by the same parity of reason, direct the uses to which the squares shall be applied. This is too absurd. With esteem and regard, I am etc.

P. S. I am informed that Mr. Hadfield is enquiring, in this City, for Carvers. I earnestly recommend, that all carving not *absolutely necessary* to preserve consistency, may be avoided; as well to save time and expence, as because I believe it is not so much the taste now as formerly.[21]

[21] From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

*A TOAST PROPOSED AT THE PHILADELPHIA DANCING ASSEMBLY

[February 22, 1797.]

May the members thereof and the *Fair* who honor it with their presence long continue in the enjoyment of an amusement so innocent and agreeable.[22]

To JOHN ARMSTRONG

Philadelphia, February 23, 1797.

Sir: Believing that there may be times and occasions, on which my opinion of the anonymous letters and their author, as delivered to the army in the year 1783, may be turned to some personal and malignant purpose, I do hereby declare, that I did not, at the time of writing my address, regard you as the author of the said letters; and further, that I have since had sufficient reason for believing, that the object of the author was just, honorable, and friendly to the country, though the means suggested by him were certainly liable to much misunderstanding and abuse. I am etc.[23]

To THE MASSACHUSETTS SENATORS

[February 24, 1797.]

Gentlemen: The sentiments expressed in the address you have delivered to me from the Senate and House of Represent-

[22] From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach, of New York City. The date is assumed, as this toast may have been given at any one of the assembly balls attended by the President from the year 1790 to the above date.

On February 22 Washington wrote acknowledgments, similar in form with those already printed, to addresses received from the citizens of Northumberland County, Pennsylvania; the Pennsylvania Society of the Cincinnati and other State societies of the Cincinnati, meeting at Philadelphia; and the officers of the militia of the city and county of Philadelphia. Drafts of these are in the *Washington Papers*.

[23] From a copy in the Toner Transcripts in the Library of Congress.

atives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, sentiments as honorable to them as to me, have excited the most grateful emotions. Whatever services I have rendered to my country, in its general approbation I have received an ample reward. Having nothing in view but to vindicate its rights, secure its liberty, and promote its happiness, I might expect the most efficient aid and support in the exertions of able and upright men, and in the general spirit of my fellow citizens. All this I have experienced; and our united efforts have resulted in our independence, peace and prosperity. And I entertain the pleasing hope, that the intelligence and superior information of my fellow citizens, enabling them to discern their true interests, will lead them to the successive choice of wise and virtuous men to watch over, protect and promote them, who while they pursue those maxims of moderation, equity and prudence, which will entitle our country to perpetual peace, will cultivate that fortitude and dignity of sentiment which are essential to the maintenance of our Liberty and independence.

Should it please God, according to the prayers of your constituents, to grant me health and long life, my greatest enjoyment will be to behold the prosperity of my country; and the affection and attachment of my fellow citizens, through the whole period of my public employments, will be the subject of my most agreeable recollections: while the belief, which the affecting sentiments of the people of Massachusetts, expressed by their Senate and House of Representatives, with those of my fellow citizens in general, have inspired, that I have been the happy instrument of much good to my country and to mankind, will be a source of unceasing gratitude to Heaven.[24]

[24] The draft is in the writing of Timothy Pickering. The address from the Massachusetts Legislature is dated February 13, and is in the *Washington Papers*.

*To MATTHIAS SLOUGH

Philadelphia, February 27, 1797.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 22d instt was delivered to me yesterday morning by Mr. Root, who also delivered the Mares and horse. The latter being too clumsy about the head and legs to suit my Carriage horses, and too high in price for a common plough horse, I return him; since, as you say, no inconvenience will attend it. I must now, as I expect to leave this in ten days, depend upon purchasing a horse or Mare in this City or Neighbourhood. You will please therefore to take the price of the Mares, and whatever incidental expences have been incurred in getting them and the horse here, out of the Six hundred Dollars sent you. I have paid Mr. Root nothing, as you did not mention, in your letter, on what terms he was to bring them down; whatever you do in this case will be satisfactory to me.

I am very sensible of the polite attentions of the Inhabitants of Lancaster, as expressed by you; but as I am anxious to get home, and should have almost as far to it from that Borough as from hence, and the Road after quitting the Turnpike very little better, I shall pursue the most direct and usual rout to obtain the end. For the good wishes you have expressed for me, on the anniversary of my birth, I pray you to accept the best thanks of Dear Sir etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

*To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, February 27, 1797.

Gentlemen: As the curtain is about to close on the political scenes of my life; and consequently to terminate the agency I

have had in the affairs of the Federal City; I will, as far as a very hurried situation will permit, take notice of such parts of your several letters as remain undecided on.

Having already informed you, that a Bill is pending in Congress for Incorporating the Commissioners of the City of Washington, I shall say, or rather do nothing, relative to the Power you sent me, until the fate of that Bill is known.

I am obliged also to be silent respecting the reference of the dispute with Mr. Law; as the Attorney General, into whose hands the Papers were placed for an official opinion, has not yet made his *final* Report. So soon as it is received, it shall be transmitted, and my sentimts. therewith.

With regard to the open areas in the City, occasioned by the intersection of the Streets and avenues, explained more minutely by one of the Commissioners (Doctr. Thornton) in a letter to me, dated the 12th. instant, my opinion is, if I understand the matter rightly, that the Proprietors are entitled to no allowance for the spaces which are occasioned, simply, by the width of those Streets and avenues: but, where the areas have been enlarged by taking off the angles, in order to encrease the size of the squares, or to throw them into a circular form, it appears reasonable and just, that they should receive payment for the proportion secured to them by contract, for all such additions; but without any encroachment thereon, or change in the plan.

The Plans of the buildings for the Executive departments are in the hands of the Officers who are at the head of them. If possible, I will give some direction concerning them before I resign the Chair of Government; in order that every thing which has been refered to me, may have met with a decision.

I come now, Gentlemen, to the consideration of your sevl. letters relative to the representation made to me by Mr. Geo:

Walker. It is not to be supposed that, my communication to you proceeded from any alteration in the good opinion wch. I have always had reason to entertain of you; but from other motives which were on a former occasion expressed: and it affords me pleasure to declare to you, before I go out of Office, my real satisfaction with your conduct as Commissioners of the City. I think the United States are interested in the continuance of you in their Service, and therefore I should regret, if either of you by resignation, should deprive them of the assistance which I believe you are able to give in the business committed to your care.

As those representations were more particularly pointed against Mr. Scott, a sense of justice seems to require me to express, that according to the best of my information the charges are unfounded; and that nothing in him is wanting, except residence in the City, to render him a useful and valuable member of the board of Commissioners. the necessity of which I am persuaded he must see and will yield accordingly. With very great etc.[25]

*To LANDON CARTER

Philadelphia, February 27, 1797.

Sir Your favor of the 14th. inst came duly to hand, and I hope, as the season is approaching fast when the ground should be prepared for it, that you have informed Mr. James Anderson (my Manager) in a letter directed to the care of the Postmaster in Alexandria, at what time he may send for the Peas you were so obliging as to promise me.

[25] From the *House of Representatives Collection* in the Library of Congress.

On February 27 Washington replied to addresses from the common council of Philadelphia; and to the select committee of Philadelphia. The drafts of these brief replies are in the *Washington Papers*.

Having informed Mr. Anderson of my expectation of Peas from you, he suggested (and I thought it a good expedient) that instead of sending my own Waggon along the heavy road between Mount Vernon and Stafford Court House, that one should be hired by you to transport them to some landg. on the Potomack; at which my Boat at an an appointed time, might meet them. As the roads, I am told, were never worse than at present; and as no road in the world can be deeper, or more distressing for horses to plunge through than the one from Occoquan to Stafford Court house; the expedient before mentioned has, in a manner, become essential: and I will cheerfully add the cost of Waggonage to the price of the Peas, and pay the whole by your order; or remit it in Bank notes as soon as the amount is made known to me.

As delay, or uncertainty in any respect, may prove injurious, I have put this letter (open) under cover to Mr. Anderson, with a request that he may also write you on the subject, for the purpose of having a time and place fixed, that my Boat may not be disappointed when it arrives. The matter therefore now rests between you, and him. With great esteem I am etc.[26]

To GEORGE WASHINGTON PARKE CUSTIS

Philadelphia, February 27, 1797.

Dear Washington: Your letter of the 22d. inst. received. The affectionate sentiments contained in them are highly pleasing to me. But that which affords a still higher gratification, is to hear that you are not only attentive to your studies, but pleased with them also. Hence, I draw the most agreeable presages, that you will reward my care and anxieties to see you a polished

[26] From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Gerald Lambert, of New York City.

Scholar, and a useful member of Society, by persevering with assiduity and steadiness in the course you are now in. It will be the source, through life, from whence your most pleasing and happy reflexions will flow; and when the results are compared with the conduct of the idle, and dissipated youth, of whom too many examples are to be seen, they will afford you abundant cause for heartfelt rejoicings.

I am not acquainted with the design or tendency of the Whig Society, of which you say you have become a Member; of course I can express no opinion thereon; but as youth always require the experience of age, my advice to you is, to enter into no Society while you are at College that is not sanctioned by the Professors; and are in a particular manner by the President thereof; whom I would wish you to consider *always* in the light of a friend, as well as a Preceptor.

I have confidence that your expences will always be reasonable, and proper; and when that is the case, they will never be disputed.

The amount of Doctr. Smiths account is, or immediately will be paid to his order; and as you will want the means of transporting yourself to Mt. Vernon during the vacation, get that Gentleman to form an estimate of them, that the money may be sent to you before I leave this City. Your Grand Mamma will be attentive to the articles you left here.

As the Curtain of my Political life is about to drop I am, as you may suppose, a great deal hurried in the closing scenes of it; if no other evidences of it could be given, the hurry with which this letter is written, and the many interlineations which are to be found therein, would ascertain the fact. As early in next week as I can possibly prepare for it my journey for Mount Vernon will commence: Where we shall expect to see you immediately after the vacation, that you may remain with your

friends there as long as the time allowed for it will permit. Your Grand Mamma, Sister and the rest of the family are all well. So are Mr. Lear and Mrs. Lear, both of them are now in this City. I wish you a continuance of health. And am Very affectionately Your etc.[27]

To ALLEN McLANE

Philadelphia, February 27, 1797.

Dr Sir: I have the pleasure to inform you are Appointed with the Advice of the Senate of the United States Collector of the Customs for the District of Delaware.

I have Selected you from a Conviction that you will fill the Important Office with Honour to yourself and Advantage to your Country. And Sincerely wish you may find it your Interest to Abandon your Other pursuits for the Support of your family.

Wilmington will be your place of Residence Settled by Law, which I apprehend you will find a more healthy Situation than you have resided Since the peace. I am etc.[28] [N.Y.H.S.]

*To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Tuesday Morning, February 28, 1797.

Dear Sir: Let me entreat you to attend early this morning to a fit character as a Comr. to attend the proposed Treaty with the Indians, by Mr. Morris;[29] and on this head, and on the message proper to accompany the nomination, I wish you would advise with Colo. Pickering; who has had more to do in Indian Affairs than any other Officer now in the Government, and perhaps may more readily think of a proper person to be entrusted.

[27] From a copy by R. A. Brock in the Tonner Transcripts in the Library of Congress.
[28] From a copy in an unidentified hand.
[29] Lewis(?) Morris.

As it is several days since the application was made, I wish to make the nomination without further delay. If a Gentleman from New Jersey, Delaware, or Maryland could be obtained, it wd. be desirable; or from Connecticut; and I believe Mr. Learned[30] is in Town, so is Mr. Dexter[31] both good characters. Something must also be done with the Military Bill, this day. Yours always[32]

To THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

United States, February 28, 1797.

Gentlemen of the House of Representatives: Having maturely considered the Bill to alter and amend an Act entitled an Act to ascertain and fix the military establishment of the United States which was presented to me on the twenty second day of this Month I now return it to the House of Representatives, in which it originated with my objections.[33] First. If the Bill passes into a law the two Companies of light dragoons will be from that moment legally out of service, though they will afterwards continue actually in service, and for their services during this interval, namely from the time of legal to the time of actual discharge, it will be unlawful to pay them, unless some future provision be made by law. Though they may be discharged at the pleasure of Congress, in justice they ought to receive their pay not only to the time of passing the law, but at least to the time of their actual discharge. Secondly. It will be

[30] Ebenezer Learned.

[31] Samuel Dexter.

[32] From the *McHenry Photostats* in the Library of Congress.

[33] The veto was considered by the House, March 1, and the vote taken thereon being 55 to 36, the veto was sustained. A new bill was drafted, "exactly the same as the former, except an omission of the parts objected to by the President." It was passed March 1 and approved by the President, March 3.

inconvenient and injurious to the public to dismiss the light Dragoons as soon as notice of the law can be conveyed to them; one of the Companies having been lately destined to a necessary and important service. Thirdly. The Companies of Light Dragoons consist of one hundred and twenty six non commissioned Officers and privates, who are bound to serve as dismounted Dragoons, when ordered so to do; they have received in bounties about two thousand dollars; one of them is completely equipped, and above half of the non commissioned Officers and privates have yet to serve more than one third the term of their inlistment; and besides there will in the course of the year be a considerable deficiency in the complement of infantry intended to be continued. Under these circumstances to discharge the Dragoons does not seem to comport with œconomy. Fourthly. It is generally agreed that some Cavalry either Militia or regular will be necessary and according to the best information I have been able to obtain, it is my opinion, that the latter will be less expensive and more useful than the former, in preserving peace between the frontier settlers, and the Indians and therefore a part of the Military establishment should consist of Cavalry.[34]

*To GEORGE CLINTON

Philadelphia, February 28, 1797.

My dear Sir: Your favour of the 14th. instt. with a Postscript of the 24th. came to my hands yesterday: and I hereby acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Wilkes's draught on the Cashier of the Bank of Pennsylvania for the sum of two thousand five hundred dollars on account of our joint concern in the lotts in Coxburgh, and which, as appears by the items of an account

[34] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

enclosed overpays my dividend of the receipts £26.0.1½ York Currency.

Whenever it shall suit your convenience I would thank you for informing me what lotts remain unsold, and at what price you think it probable they will sell, and when. No injury, I am persuaded, has been sustained hitherto, but the contrary by delay in the Sale; but whether a further postponement will be advantageous, or not, your means (greater than mine) will enable you to decide.

Future payments may be made by draughts on the Bank of Alexandria or Columbia; in Post notes; or (which is less desirable because more hazardous) in Bank Notes of the United States by the Mail.

I have been constant in my enquiries after your health and with sincere pleasure heard, latterly, that it was well restored. As early in next week as I can make arrangements for it, my journey for Mount Vernon will commence. Twenty miles from which I think it is not likely I shall ever be again. But if business, inclination, or any other cause should ever induce you to visit that hemisphere, I can assure you with much truth, that I shall be extremely happy to see you under the shade of my vine and fig tree. Mrs. Washington unites cordially with me in every good wish for you, Mrs. Clinton and family, and with sincere esteem and affectionate regard I am etc.

CIRCULAR TO SENATORS

United States, March 1, 1797.

It appearing to me proper that the Senate of the United States should be convened on Saturday the fourth day of March instant; you are desired to attend in the Chamber of the Senate on that day at Eleven OClock in the forenoon, to receive any

communications which the President of the United States may then have to lay before you, touching their interests.[35]

[N. H. H. S.]

To THE SENATE

United States, March 2, 1797.

Gentlemen of the Senate: Application having been made to me to permit a Treaty to be held with the Seneka Nation of Indians, to effect the purchase of a parcel of their land under a pre-emption right derived from the State of Massachusetts and situated within the State of New York, and it appearing to me reasonable, that such opportunity should be afforded, provided the negociation shall be conducted at the expence of the applicant, and at the desire and with the consent of the Indians; always considering these as pre-requisites, I now nominate Isaac Smith to be a Commissioner to hold a treaty with the Seneka Nation for the aforesaid purpose.[36]

*To HENRY KNOX

Philadelphia, March 2, 1797.

My dear Sir: Amongst the last Acts of my political life, and before I go hence into retirement, *profound,* will be the acknowledgment of your kind and affectionate letter from Boston, dated the 15th. of January.[37]

From the friendship I have always borne you, and from the interest I have ever taken in whatever relates to your prosperity and happiness, I participated in the sorrows which I know you

[35] In the writing of a Senate clerk. From the summons sent to Senator Samuel Livermore, of New Hampshire.

[36] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

[37] In the *Washington Papers.*

must have felt for your late heavy losses.[38] But is not for man to scan the wisdom of Providence. The best he can do, is to submit to its decrees. Reason, religion and Philosophy, teaches us to do this, but 'tis time alone that can ameliorate the pangs of humanity, and soften its woes.

To the wearied traveller who sees a resting place, and is bending his body to lean thereon, I now compare myself; but to be suffered to do *this* in peace, is I perceive too much, to be endured by *some*. To misrepresent my motives; to reprobate my politics; and to weaken the confidence which has been reposed in my administration, are objects which cannot be relinquished by those who, will be satisfied with nothing short of a change in our political System. The consolation however, which results from conscious rectitude, and the approving voice of my Country, unequivocally expressed by its Representatives, deprives their sting of its poison, and places in the same point of view both the weakness, and malignity of their efforts.

Although the prospect of retirement is most grateful to my soul, and I have not a wish to mix again in the great world, or to partake in its politics, yet, I am not without my regrets at parting with (perhaps never more to meet) the few intimates whom I love, among these, be assured you are one.

The account given by Mr. Bingham and others, of your agreeable Situation and prospects at St. George's, gave me infinite pleasure; and no one wishes more sincerely than I do, that they may increase with your years. The remainder of my life (which in the course of nature cannot be long) will be occupied in rural amusements, and though I shall seclude myself as much as possible from the noisy and bustling crowd, none more than myself, would be regaled by the company of those I esteem, at

[38] The death of three children.

Mount Vernon: more than 20 Miles from which, after I arrive there, it is not likely I ever shall be.

As early in next week as I can make arrangements for it, I shall commence my journey for Mount Vernon. To morrow, at dinner, I shall, as a servant of the public, take my leave of the President Elect,[39] of the foreign characters, heads of Departments, &ca. And the day following, with pleasure, I shall witness the inauguration of my Successor to the Chair of government.

On the subject of Politics I shall say nothing; you will have an opportunity of seeing and conversing with many of the Legislators; from whom, so far as it relates to the proceedings of their own body, they can give you the details. The Gazettes will furnish the rest.

Mrs. Washington unites with me in every good wish for you, Mrs. Knox and family, and with unfeigned truth, I am yours always, and affectionately. [MS. H. S.]

To THE RECTOR, CHURCH WARDENS, AND VESTRYMEN OF THE UNITED EPISCOPAL CHURCHES OF CHRIST CHURCH AND ST. PETER'S[40]

[March 2, 1797.]

Gentlemen: To this public testimony of your approbation of my conduct and affection for my person I am not insensible, and your prayers for my present and future happiness merit my warmest acknowledgments. It is with peculiar satisfaction I can say, that, prompted by a high sense of duty in my attendance on public worship, I have been gratified, during my residence among you, by the liberal and interesting discourses which have been delivered in your Churches.

[39] John Adams.
[40] Of Philadelphia, Pa.

Believing that that Government alone can be approved by Heaven, which promotes peace and secures protection to its Citizens in every thing that is dear and interesting to them, it has been the great object of my administration to insure those invaluable ends; and when, to a consciousness of the purity of intentions, is added the approbation of my fellow Citizens, I shall experience in my retirement that heartfelt satisfaction which can only be exceeded by the hope of future happiness.[41]

To HENRY LEE

March 2, 1797.

Sir: In answer to your enquiry concerning the Land I sold to you, last year, I can inform you from my own knowledge.

It is part of the great Dismal Swamp, about [42] Miles from Norfolk convenient to the Canal now Cutting, its soil extremely rich covered with Cypress and Juniper, the under growth Cane &ca. I am etc.[43]

*To JONATHAN TRUMBULL

Philadelphia, March 3, 1797.

My dear Sir: Before the curtain drops on my political life, which it will do this evening, I expect for ever; I shall acknowledge, although it be in a few hasty lines only, the receipt of your kind and affectionate letter of the 23d. of January last.

When I add, that according to custom, all the Acts of the Session; except two or three very unimportant Bills, have been presented to me within the last four days, *you* will not be surprised at the pressure under which I write at present; but it must astonish *others* who know that the Constitution allows

[41] The draft is in the writing of Timothy Pickering.
[42] Left blank in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.
[43] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

the President ten days to deliberate on *each Bill* that is brought before him that he should be allowed by the Legislature less than half that time to consider *all* the business of the Session; and in some instances, scarcely an hour to revolve the most important. But as the scene is closing, with me, it is of little avail *now* to let it be with murmers.

I should be very unhappy if I thought my relinquishing the Reins of government wd. produce any of the consequences which your fears forebode. In all free governments, contention in elections will take place; and, whilst it is confined to our own citizens it is not to be regretted; but severely indeed ought it to be reprobated when occasioned by foreign machinations. I trust however, that the good sense of our Countrymen will guard the public weal against this, and every other innovation; and that, altho we may be a little wrong, now and then, we shall return to the right path, with more avidity. I can never believe that Providence, which has guided us so long, and through such a labirinth, will withdraw its protection at this Crisis.

Although I shall resign the chair of government without a single regret, or any desire to intermeddle in politics again, yet there are many of my compatriots (among whom be assured I place you) from whom I shall part sorrowing; because, unless I meet with them at Mount Vernon it is not likely that I shall ever see them more, as I do not expect that I shall ever be twenty miles from it after I am tranquilly settled there. To tell you how glad I should be to see you at that place is unnecessary; but this I will add, that it would not only give me pleasure, but pleasure also to Mrs. Washington, and others of the family with whom you are acquainted; and who all unite in every good wish for you, and yours, with Dear Sir, Your sincere friend and Affectionate Servant.

*To THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Philadelphia, March 3, 1797.

Gentlemen: Three things relative to the City of Washington call for my decision, and this is the last day I have Powers to give any.

The first respects the dispute with Mr. Law, touching the conveyances of Lotts; the second, to my approbation of the Plans for the Executive Offices; and the third, to the Instrument you transmitted to me in your letter of the 31st. of January.

With regard to the first, however hard and unexpected the case may be as it affects the public interest, and whatever my private opinion on some points may be; I think it safest, and all things considered perhaps the best, to let the opinion of the Law Officer of the government, herewith enclosed, prevail; and I advise it accordingly. The second, not only meets my approbation, but is much approved also by the heads of Departments; and may, when the funds and other circumstances will permit be carried into effect; for which purpose the Plans are returned with my approving signature. On the other, or third point, the Bill for incorporating the Commissioners of the City of Washington, has not been passed into a Law, in consequence of the superior claim of more important matters upon the attention of Congress in the close of the present Session. The instrument you transmitted to me, as mentioned before, having been altered according to the advice of the Attorney General you will herewith receive, formally executed.[44]

Another matter occurs which is necessary to apprise you of. In your letter of the 31st. of Jany. it is said

[44] A copy of this power of conveyance, dated Mar. 2, 1797, is in *District of Columbia Letters and Papers* in the Library of Congress.

We have fowarded to the Secretary of State, a plan of the City under cover to Messrs. Willinck, with all the public property particularly designated on the face of it; and have written to those Gentlemen, pressing them to forward the loan by all the means in their power.

Inquiring the other day of the Secretary if it was dispatched, he answered that no such packet had been recd. by him.

Your letter of the 27th. Ulto. is received and I am sorry your prospt. of a loan in Holld. is so bad. With esteem etc.[45]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

[Philadelphia, March 3, 1797.]

[Dr] Sir: At the conclusion of my public employments, I have thought it expedient to notice the publication of certain forged letters which first appeared in the year 1777, and were obtruded upon the public as mine. They are said by the editor to have been found in a small portmanteau, that I had left in the care of my Mulatto servant named Billy,[46] who, it is pretended, was taken prisoner at Fort Lee, in 1776. The period when these letters were first printed will be recollected, and what were the impressions they were intended to produce on the public mind. It was then supposed to be of some consequence to strike at the integrity of the motives of the American Commander in Chief, and to paint his inclinations as at variance with his professions and his duty. Another crisis in the affairs of America having occurred, the same weapon has been resorted to, to wound my character and deceive the people.

The letters in question have the dates, addresses, and signatures here following.

[45] From *Letters of the Presidents of the United States to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* in the Library of Congress.

[46] William Lee.

New-York, June 12, 1776. To Mr. Lund Washington, at Mount Vernon, Fairfax County, Virginia.

G. W.

To John Parke Custis, Esqr. at the Hon. Benedict Calvert's Esqr. Mount Airy, Maryland, June 18, 1776.

GEO. WASHINGTON.

New-York, July 8, 1776. To Mr. Lund Washington, at Mount-Vernon, Fairfax County, Virginia.

G. W.

New-York, July 16, 1776. To Mr. Lund Washington, &c.

G. W.

New-York, July 15, 1776. To Mr. Lund Washington, &c.

G. W.

New-York, July 22, 1776. To Mr. Lund Washington, &c.

G. W.

June 24, 1776. To Mrs. Washington.

G. W.

At the time, when these letters first appeared, it was notorious to the army immediately under my command, and particularly to the gentlemen attached to my person, that my Mulatto Man Billy had never been one moment in the power of the enemy. It is also a fact, that no part of my baggage, or any of my attendants, were captured during the whole course of the war. These well-known facts made it unnecessary, during the war, to call the public attention to the forgery, by any express declaration of mine: and a firm reliance on my fellow-citizens, and the abundant proofs they gave of their confidence in me, rendered it alike unnecessary to take any formal notice of the revival of the imposition, during my civil administration. But as I cannot know how soon a more serious event may succeed to that which will this day take place, I have thought it a duty that I owed to Myself, to my Country and to Truth, now to detail the circumstances above recited; and to add my solemn declaration, that the letters herein described are a base forgery, and that I never saw or heard of them until they appeared in print.

The present letter I commit to your care, and desire that it may be deposited in the office of the department of state, as a testimony of the truth to the present generation and to posterity. [Accept, I pray you, the sincere esteem and affectionate regard of, dear Sir, &c.][47]

To THE CLERGY OF DIFFERENT DENOMINATIONS RESIDING IN AND NEAR THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

[March 3, 1797.]

Gentlemen: Not to acknowledge with gratitude and sensibility the affectionate addresses and benevolent wishes of my fellow Citizens on my retiring from public life, would prove that I have been unworthy of the Confidence which they have been pleased to repose in me.

And, among those public testimonies of attachment and approbation, none can be more grateful than that of so respectable a body as yours.

Believing, as I do, that *Religion* and *Morality* are the essential pillars of Civil society, I view, with unspeakable pleasure, that harmony and brotherly love which characterizes the Clergy of different denominations, as well in this, as in other parts of the United States; exhibiting to the world a new and interesting spectacle, at once the pride of our Country and the surest basis of universal Harmony.

That your labours for the good of Mankind may be crowned with success; that your temporal enjoyments may be commensurate with your merits; and that the future reward of good

[47] The draft is in the writing of Timothy Pickering. The words in brackets are in the writing of Washington.

and faithful Servants may be your's, I shall not cease to supplicate the Divine Author of life and felicity.[48]

*To ELIZABETH GRAEME FERGUSON

Philadelphia, March 5, 1797.

Madam: The multiplicity of business which occurred in the course of the last Session, particularly in the latter part of it, placed it entirely out of my power to attend to matters of private concern. This reason, I hope, you will have the goodness to accept as an apology for my delay in acknowledging the receipt of your very polite and obliging favour of the 16th. of January,[49] at an earlier period, and even now, being not less occupied in preparing to leave this City, I perceive the necessity of asking further forgiveness for this laconic epistle. I have, however, conversed freely on the subject of your letter with our mutual friend Mr. Boudinot, who will inform you fully of the circumstances under which I find myself relative to your request. To his information therefore, I beg leave to refer you.

I cannot conclude however, without offering you my sincere thanks for the honor you intended me; for the enclosures

[48] The draft is in the writing of George Washington Craik.

On March 3 Washington signed a pardon for 10 persons convicted of high treason in connection with the Whiskey Insurrection; and also granted a remittance of a fine inflicted on a smuggler. These were, probably, Washington's last official acts as President of the United States. These documents were sold at auction, Feb. 26, 1925.

On March 3 Washington also wrote to M. von Steuben, in Pomerania, who had inquired about the estate of the late Baron Steuben: "To supercede any further inquiries of the kind, perhaps I ought to add, that although the pay and emoluments of the Baron from the United States were liberal, and supported him several years after the close of the American war, yet possessed of a generous heart and accustomed to an expensive mode of living, he felt some embarrassments, until in the year 1790 Congress granted him a pension of 2500 Dollars a year. From this he could make no saving; and whatever Estate he left behind him resulted from the bounty of particular States in grateful acknowledgment for the services he had rendered to the United States during the American war." A press copy of this letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

[49] Not now found in the *Washington Papers*.

accompanying your letter; and for the favourable and flattering sentiments which you have expressed for me therein. To which permit me to add assurances of the high esteem etc.

*To SIR JOHN SINCLAIR

Philadelphia, March 6, 1797.

Sir: On the 11th of Decr. I wrote you a long letter; and intended before the close of the last Session of Congress (which ended on the third instant, conformably to the Constitution) to have addressed you again; but oppressed as I was with the various occurrencies incident thereto, especially in the latter part of it, it has not been in my power to do so during its continuance; and now, the arrangements necessary to my departure from this City, for a more tranquil theatre, and for the indulgence of rural pursuits, will oblige me to suspend my purpose until I am fixed at Mount Vernon, where I expect soon to be; having resigned the Chair of government to Mr. Jno. Adams on friday last; the day on which I completed my Second four years Administration.

Near the end of his administration Washington drew up several lists of the articles in the President's house, preparatory to moving to Mount Vernon. These lists are in the *Washington Papers* at the end of February, 1797, and are those of "Household furniture" under which are listed the "Plates" and "Plated Ware"; "Japan Ware"; "Looking Glasses"; "Knives and Forks"; "Andirons"; "Fenders"; "Shovels and Tongs"; "Clock"; "Upholstry"; "Counterpains"; "Rugs and Blankets"; "Lustres"; "Gerandoles"; "Sconces"; "Lamps"; "Cabinet Work"; and "Stoves." "Nothing herein has been said relatively to the Table Linnen, Sheeting, China and Glass-ware which was furnished at the expence of the United States; because they have been worn out, broken, stolen and replaced (at private expence) over and over again. Nor has any account been taken of the Kitchen furniture, as that also, except a few of the most durable articles, which will be left, has been broke, burned out, and otherwise reduced as above. The Carpets also are entirely worn out. all on the floors, at present, have been purchased on private account." Another list gives "Articles in the Green drawing Room which *will* be sold" and "Articles in the above Room which may be purchased although the sale of them is not desired." The last list is of "Prints purchased; and at what prices. Size of the impression" and "Size within the impression."

Under the circumstances here mentioned, I should not have troubled you, at this time, with so short a letter, but for the purpose of accompanying it with two or three Pamphlets on the subjects of Agriculture; one of which treats more extensively on Gypsum as a manure than any I have seen before. The other two will only serve to shew that essays of a similar kind are making in this infant country.

I am sorry to add, that nothing *final*, in Congress, has been decided respecting the institution of a National board of Agriculture, recommended by me at the opening of the Session. But this did not, I believe, proceed from any disinclination to the measure, but from their limited setting, and a pressure of what they conceived, more important business. I think it highly probable that next Session will bring this matter to maturity. With the highest esteem etc.

*To GEORGE BALL

Philadelphia, March 6, 1797.

Sir: Enclosed is the copy of a letter I wrote to you in answer to yours from Lancaster, and to that place directed it supposing your residence to be in that County. This letter will be directed to the care of the Postmaster in Fredericksburgh; but as you are not particular in designating the place at which you are to be found, it may not, any more than the former, find its way to you.

The receipt of your letter of the 16th Ulto. should have had an earlier acknowledgment, had not the business of the Session pressed heavily upon me towards the close of it. I am etc.

A copy of a conveyance dated Apr. 10, 1797, of 400 acres of land in the "City of Gloucester," Va., from Washington to George Ball, for £200. Virginia currency, is in the Toner Transcripts in the Library of Congress. On Nov. 3, 1805, Ball indorsed a memorandum, on the original, consenting that this land which was "intended to be conveyed to me by the within contract" be sold and transferred by the executors of the late General Washington to Burwell Bassett.

*To CALEB GIBBS

Philadelphia, March 6, 1797.

Dear Sir: I will turn over your letter of the 13th. instant to the President of the United States. You may be assured that I have not been wanting in disposition to serve you in anything that was consistent with my duty as a public Officer: but permit me to add that you seem to have lost sight of three things: 1st. that there are a number of very deserving men to be provided for, whose situation during the War, was, by no comparison, harder than yours. 2d. that offices cannot be created for men. and 3d. that you have estimated the emoluments of the one you have had at two low a rate.

Eight hundred dollars, or £240 lawful money per ann, added to the private resources of a man without adding a fraction, necessarily, to his expences is by no means a dispisable thing, but as it is no longer in my power to nominate men to offices these observations might have been spared.

I heartily thank you for your good wishes, and reciprocate them sincerely to you, and yours, being etc.

*To JEREMIAH WADSWORTH

Philadelphia, March 6, 1797.

Dear Sir: Your favor of the 27th. Ulto. reached me in the forenoon, and the Salmon in the afternoon of the 3d instant; and merit, and receive, my particular thanks. The latter regaled a number of Gentlemen at an entertainment given by the Merchants of this City on the 4th.

I shall thank you (when re-published) for the refutation of the impudent forgeries of letters, carrying my signature, which Mr Bache has taken so much pains to impose on the public as

genuine productions. This man has celebrity in a certain way, for His calumnies are to be exceeded only by his Impudence, and both stand unrivalled.

Mrs. Washington unites with me in every good wish for you, Mrs. Wadsworth and family and I am etc.

P. S. On the 8th I expect to commence my journey for Mount Vernon.[50]

*To CHIEF JUSTICE OLIVER ELLSWORTH

Philadelphia, March 8, 1797.

Dear Sir: Before I leave this City, which will be within less than twenty four hours; permit me in acknowledging the receipt of your kind and affectionate note of the 6th, to offer you the thanks of a grateful heart for the Sentiments, you have expressed in my favor, and for those attentions with which you have always honoured me. In return, I pray you to accept all my good wishes for the perfect restoration of your health, and for all the happiness this life can afford. As your Official duty will necessarily call you to the Southward, I will take the liberty of adding that it will aways give me pleasure to see you at Mount Vernon as you pass and repass. With unfeigned esteem and regard, in which Mrs. Washington joins me, I am etc.

To BARTHOLOMEW DANDRIDGE

Philadelphia, March 8, 1797.

My Dear Sir: Your conduct during a six years residence in my family having been such as to meet my full approbation and believing that a declaration to this effect would be satisfactory

[50] From a photostat of the original in the Connecticut State Library.

On March 6 Washington wrote to the Rhode Island Society of the Cincinnati a brief acknowledgment of their address. This reply is entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

to yourself and justice requiring it from me, I make it with pleasure. And in full confidence that those principles of honor, integrity and benevolence which I have reason to believe have hitherto guided your steps will still continue to mark your conduct, I have only to add a wish that you may lose no opportunity of making such advances in useful acquirements, as may benefit yourself, your friends and mankind. And I am led to anticipate an accomplishment of this wish when I consider the manner in which you have hitherto improved such occasions as have offered themselves to you.

The career of life on which you are now entering will present new Scenes and frequent opportunities for the improvement of a mind desirous of obtaining useful knowledge; but I am sure you will never forget, that, without Virtue and without integrity the finest talents of the most brilliant accomplishments can never gain the respect or conciliate the esteem of the truly valuable part of mankind.

Wishing you health happiness and prosperity, in all your laudable undertakings I remain etc.[51]

*To THE CITIZENS OF ALEXANDRIA AND ITS NEIGHBORHOOD

[March 23, 1797.]

Gentlemen: In the character of a private citizen, I have the honor to receive your Address, and I do it with all the sensibility that gratitude, friendship and affection can excite.[52]

[51] The draft is in the writing of George Washington Craik.

On March 9 Washington left Philadelphia for Mount Vernon. He dined at Chester, lodged at Wilmington, and reached Baltimore on March 12, where he received and answered an address from the mayor and council, which is entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

[52] This address was presented to Washington at the public dinner given to him by the citizens of Alexandria at Gadsby's Tavern, at 2 p. m., Thursday, March 23.

Having obeyed the calls of my country, and spent the prime of my life in rendering it the best services of which my abilities were capable; and finding that the infirmities of age were creeping upon me, it became as necessary, as it was congenial to my feelings, to seek, in the shades of retirement, the repose I had always contemplated.

To have finished my public career to the satisfaction of my fellow-citizens, will, to my latest moments, be matter of pleasing reflection; and to find an evidence of this approbation among my neighbours and friends (some of whom have been the companions of my Juvenile years) will contribute not a little to highten the enjoyment.

No [wish in my retirement can exceed that of seeing our Country happy; and I can entertain no doubt of its being so, if all of us act the part of good Citizens; contributing our best endeavours to maintain the Constitution, support the laws, and guard our Independence against all assaults from whatsoever quarter they may come. clouds may and doubtless often will in the vicissitudes of events, hover over our political concerns, but a steady adherence to these principles will not only dispel them but render our prospects the brighter by such temporary obscurities.

For the affectionate, and flattering manner in which you have been pleased to express your regrets on the occasion of my relinquishing public employment, and for your congratulations on my return to my long forsaken residence at Mt. Vernon, I pray you to accept my warmest acknowledgments, and the assurances of the additional pleasure I shall derive from the prospect of spending the remainder of my days in ease and tranquility among you; employed in rural pursuits, and in the exercise of Domestic and other duties.

For the prosperity of the Town and neighbourhood, and for your individual happiness, I offer my best vows.][53]

*To TOBIAS LEAR

Mount Vernon, March 25, 1797.

[My] dear Sir: Your letter of the 20th instt, with the Bill of lading for the Goods in the Sloop Salem,[54] and another letter of the 15th are both received; and I hope this will find you safely arrived in the Federal City.

I have got Painters at work in order to prepare my rooms for the furniture which is expected; but I find I have begun at the wrong end, for some joiners work (of the deficiency of which I was ignorant before it was examined) ought to have preceeded theirs, as the fixing of the chimney pieces ought also to do. the first I have engaged, but cannot, on enquiry, find that a skilful hand is to be had in Alexandria to execute the latter. I would thank you therefore for engaging one, if to be had in the Federal City or George town, to be here on Monday or tuesday at farthest as my work will be at a stand without. To prevent imposition, and to avoid disputes, I would prefer employing the Artisan by the day. The work *immediately* foreseen, and which must be done without delay, is, to refix the marble chimney piece in the Parlour which is almost falling out; to fix the New one (expected from Philadelphia) in the small dining room; to

[53] From a partial facsimile in a sales catalogue, 1912. The portion in brackets is from the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

In the "Letter Book" and noted as having been received March 15, the day Washington arrived at Mount Vernon, is copied an address to Washington from the president and professors of Georgetown College, but no copy or draft of a reply is now found in the *Washington Papers*.

[54] The *Salem* brought 97 boxes, 14 trunks, 43 casks, 13 packages, 3 hampers, and a large number of other things, which are enumerated in the invoice, from Philadelphia to Mount Vernon. This invoice is in the *Washington Papers* under date of Mar. 17, 1797.

remove the one *now* there into what is called the School room; to fix the Grate which is coming round in the large dining room; and to give some repairs to the steps; which (like most things else I have looked into since I have been at home) are sadly out of repair.

'Tis possible either of the Commissioners or Captn. Hoban could point out a proper character, as they have had to do with the best workmen; and tis possible, but I do not think it very probable, that Cornelius (my old Servant) might be competent to it. two things however are necessary, viz, skill and dispatch. Our best regards are presented to all with you, and I am etc.

P. S. If Cornelius had knowledge in practice or theory sufficient for the job, I should be disposed to give him a preference; first because I am acquainted with his temper and industry; and 2dly because I foresee many other things in his line that must be done as fast as I can accomplish them; by engaging a workman upon moderate terms, make bricks or raise stone, and procure lime.

The Winds have been favorable for Captn. Elkins,[55] but we see nothing of his Sloop yet. As soon as it arrives I will let you know, as it would be very pleasing to me, to have you here at that time. Yrs. etc. [H.L.]

*To ALEXANDER SPOTSWOOD

Mount Vernon, March 26, 1797.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 22d. instant has been received, by which I find you have fixed the commencement of your journey to Kentuckey to the 3d of next month. Although some passages in your letter lead me to conclude that mine to you of the first of Feby. had got to hand, yet, as you have not acknowledged

[55] Capt. Joshua Elkins.

the receipt of it, I am left in doubt, and having a press copy thereof by me, I forward duplicate from that.

To the sentiments contained therein, relative to my land on rough Creek, I have nothing to add. I thank you sincerely for your kind congratulations on my return to this place; and with every good wish, in which Mrs. Washington unites for your prosperous journey and safe return; and with best regards for Mrs. Spotswood and the family I am etc.

To REED & FORD

Mount Vernon, March 31, 1796 [1797].

Gentn: The time for transferring to me seventy shares in the Bank of Columbia, agreeably to your obligation dated the 24th of February, having elapsed, I have to request a compliance therewith, which I presume will immediately take place; especially as I received these shares at forty dollars each, to accommodate Genl. Lee in a payment which he was to have made to me, when the same may be bought for 33 dollars Cash.

Your early attention to this business and immediate answer to this will oblige Gentn. Yr. etc.[56]

To THE BROTHERS OF ANCIENT YORK MASONS OF LODGE NO. 22[57]

[April 1, 1797.]

While my heart acknowledges with Brotherly Love, your affectionate congratulations on my retirement from the arduous toils of past years, my gratitude is no less excited by your kind wishes for my future happiness.

If it has pleased the Supreme Architect of the Universe to make me an humble instrument to promote the welfare and

[56] The draft is in the writing of Tobias Lear, who has inadvertently dated it 1796.
[57] Alexandria, Va.

happiness of my fellow men, my exertions have been abundantly recompensed by the kind partiality with which they have been received; and the assurance you give me of your belief that I have acted upon the Square in my public Capacity, will be among my principle enjoyments in this Terrestial Lodge.[58]

To HENRY LEE

Mount Vernon, April 2, 1797.

Dear Sir: If this letter should happen to find you in Philadelphia the intention of it is to bring you acquainted with the situation of Messrs. Reed and Ford's engagement to transfer (after the 28th of Mch) Seventy shares in the Bank of Columbia on your Account for my benefit.

On my way home I placed their Obligation in the hands of a Gentleman within the District of Columbia for the purpose of having this Transfer made. The following extract of his letter to me was received on Friday last but not in time to forward it by the Post of next morning, altho I instantly wrote and took the chance, of a letter getting to Messrs. Reed and Ford by the mail, of that day; and now enclosed a duplicate open for your perusal before it is delivered.

Inclosed is Reed and Fords obligation wch you left with me but on Application to one of the Officers in the Bank, to Transfer to you the Shares in question, he informed me it could not be done without a power of Attorney from them to some person in this Town to make the transfer. It is suspected by some persons here they have failed, and today I was told by a Director they had no shares in the Bank of Columbia; Perhaps you may think it advisable to write on immediately that you may secure yourself in this business.

This business you will recollect my, good Sir, was not of my seeking; that it was not agreeable to me to be paid in that way

[58] The draft is in the writing of Tobias Lear.

(because it was the money I wanted) and that it was to accommodate you, under strong assurances that the obligation of Reed and Ford, was as good as the Bank &ca. &ca., that I yielded to the measure. How far this assertion was well founded, may while you are on the spot, be worthy of enquiry, as my confidence in and disposition to oblige you, has involved this result.

I would fain hope that that part of the extract which relates to the *failure* is without foundation; and for the honor of honest men and fair dealing, I also hope it will not be found that they have been Selling property to which they had no right and of which they were not possessed. At any rate I shall lose what I ought not and what I should not, if the money had been properly paid, for from my unacquaintedness in these matters and from the motives mentioned before, have allowed 40 dollars a share when, at the time and now, the money (If I had been disposed to apply it so) would have procured these Shares, at 33 dollars each by which means in 28 hundred dollars, I sustain a loss of 490, besides losing the Interest on the former sum from the 24th of Feby. until the Transfer is made. I am etc.[59]

To BARTHOLOMEW DANDRIDGE

Mount Vernon, April 3, 1797.

Dear Sir: Mr. Lear informs me that the president[60] has declined, finally to take any part of the furniture in the Green drawing room and that you were requested to have the lustre in the middle of it packed up and sent round to this place.

If the latter should not have taken place before this letter reaches your hands let it be sent to Mrs. Morris, who I beg will receive it as a present; and to whom I will write so soon as you inform of its having happened assigning the reason why it was

[59] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[60] John Adams.

not done before. Let me know the result of this direction as soon as you can.

I wish you a pleasant passage in which your aunt joins and the full fruition of all your reasonable and proper wishes; being your Sincere friend and affectionate Servt.[61]

To GEORGE WASHINGTON PARKE CUSTIS

Mount Vernon, April 3, 1797.

Dear Washington: Your letter of the 25th ultimo has been duly received, and as your grandmamma or sister will write to you by this post, I shall leave it to them to furnish you with the details of our journey, and the occurrences since our arrival.

It gives me singular pleasure to hear that your time has been so well employed during the last winter, and that you are so sensible of the good effects of it yourself. If your improvement in other matters is equal to that which is visible in your writing, it can not but be pleasing to your friends; for the change there, both in the characters and diction is considerably for the better. A perseverance in such a course will redound much to your own benefit and reputation, and will make you at all times a welcome guest at Mount Vernon.

I have nothing to do in which you could be usefully employed in Philadelphia, and approve your determination to delay no time at that or any other place on the road, that you may have the more of it to spend among your friends in this quarter, who are very anxious to see you.

We are all in a litter and dirt, occasioned by joiners, masons, and painters, working in the house, all parts of which, as well as the out-buildings, I find upon examination, to be exceedingly out of repairs. I am etc.[62]

[61] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[62] From the printed text in Custis's *Recollections of Washington*.

*To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

(Private)

Mount Vernon, April 3, 1797.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 24th. Ulto. has been duly received, and I thank you for the information given in it: Let me pray you to have the goodness to communicate to me, occasionally, such matters as are interesting, and not contrary to the rules of your official duty to disclose. We get so many details in the Gazettes, and of such different complexions that it is impossible to know what credence to give to any of them.

The conduct of the French government is so much beyond calculation, and so unaccountable upon any principle of justice or even of that sort of policy wch. is familiar to plain understanding that I shall not *now* puzzle my brains in attempting to develop their motives to it.[63]

We got home without accident, and found the Roads drier, and better than I ever travelled them at that Season of the year. The attentions we met with on our journey were very flattering, and to some whose minds are differently formed from mine would have been highly relished, but I avoided in every instance where I had any previous knowledge of the intention, and cd. by earnest entreaties prevail, all parade, or escorts. Mrs. Washington took a violent cold in Philadelphia, which hangs upon her still but not as bad as it did.

I find myself in the situation, nearly, of a young beginner; for although I have not houses to build (except one, which I

[63] The French Directory refused to receive Pinckney as Minister from the United States. James Monroe had been given a public audience at the end of December, at which the general feeling had been strongly shown. In February, 1797, Pinckney was told by the Directory to leave France. This became known in America the latter part of March.

must erect for the accommodation and security of my Military, Civil and private Papers which are voluminous, and may be interestg) yet I have not one or scarcely anything else about me that does not require considerable repairs. In a word I am already surrounded by Joiners, Masons, Painters &ca &ca. and such is my anxiety to get out of their hands, that I have scarcely a room to put a friend into or to set in myself, without the Music of hammers, or the odoriferous smell of Paint.

I will make no apology for putting the enclosed under cover to you. If General Lee should have left Philadelphia, let me request the favor of you to open the letter to him and cause the one under *that* cover to be delivered to Messrs. Reed & Ford by a person who you can inform me *certainly has done so,* that I may know to what cause to ascribe (should it happen) any delay in their answer, and add, if you please, whether there be any cause to suspect a failure in these Gentlemen.

You will readily perceive that what is said of them, and what I write to Genl. Lee is of a private nature, and not to be mentioned unless the reports respecting Reed & Ford are facts of notariety. Mrs. Washington and Miss Custis thanks you for your kind remembrance of them and joins in best regards for Mrs. McHenry and yourself with Dear Sir etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

*To DOCTOR JAMES ANDERSON

Mount Vernon, April 7, 1797.

Sir: A few days since, through the Channel of our Minister in London, I was favoured with the receipt of your third Volume of Essays relating to Agriculture and Rural Affairs; for which I pray you to accept my best thanks.

On April 3 Washington replied to an address from the General Assembly of Rhode Island. This reply is entered in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers.*

I am once more seated under my own Vine and fig tree, and hope to spend the remainder of my days, which in the ordinary course of things (being in my Sixty sixth year) cannot be many, in peaceful retirement, making political pursuits yield to the more rational amusement of cultivating the Earth.

To do this in the *small* way, I find I shall need a Gardener in October next, the time of the one I now have terminating the 10th of that month and no inclination on my part to employ him any longer. You have not only skilful persons of this profession in Scotland, but generally speaking, they are more orderly and industrious than those of most other nations, and besides the dissimilitude of climate between the Southern and middle parts of Scotland, and the middle States of this Country, is not great. These considerations have induced me to turn my eyes that way; presuming that the emigration of men in that line are not under governmental restraints.

My present manager (Mr. James Anderson, an honest, industrious and judicious Scotchman five years since from the county of Fife) has written to a Mr. Foreman and to a Mr. Harper, (whose places of residences and professions, together with what was formerly his own, are to be found in his memorandum enclosed), to procure, and send me a Gardener. He thinks it is much in the power of Mr. Harper, who according to his account has been several years principal Gardener to Lord Murray, to do this; but I have desired *him,* to request *them,* to consult and advise with you on this Subject before any agreement is entered into, as I shall place more confidence in a Gardener who is approved by you, than by them alone, without this check. For taking the liberty of requesting this favor of you, and for the trouble it must necessarily give I shall rely on your goodness and usual complaisance for a pardon.

I would prefer a single man to a married one, but shall not object to the latter if he has no children, or not more than one, or at most two; and his wife would undertake to superintend my Spinners, and if required a Small dairy at the Mansion house (where the Gardens are). The man ought to be a good Kitchen and Nursery Gardener; to have some knowledge of a Green house and hot house, and how to raise things in hot beds. He would have two or three labourers under him, but not placed there with a view to exempt him from manual labour. He would be furnished with a good apartment, convenient to his work, to reside in; and would have an ample allowance of good Provisions with fuel; and if a single man, with his washing also.

My Manager conceives that such a character, with the assurances here given, might be had for twenty guineas pr. Annum: but if he should be mistaken in this, and a well recommended Gardener could be engaged for twenty five guineas a year, I would allow the latter sum and pay his or their passage (as the case may be) provided he (or they) would enter into articles with you (or some other in my behalf) to remain with me three years, four would be still better, without which, that is for a single year only, I would not encounter the expence of the passage, and run the hazard of being left to seek another at the end of it. Both of us would be placed on surer ground by the longest term; while one, or the other, perhaps both ultimately might be incommoded by the shorter.

You would do me a particular favor by acknowledging the receipt of this letter as soon as convenient after it gets to your hands informing me of the prospect of succeeding, for I shall be without a Gardener in October, and cannot engage one here permanently until I know the result of my application with you. With great esteem etc.

PS. Upon second thoughts, It appears best that the letters of my Manager to Messrs. Foreman [64] and Harper shd pass under cover with this letter open to you that you may know precisely what is requested of them and give your advice accordingly.

To GEORGE LEWIS

Mount Vernon, April 9, 1797.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 31st. Ult. from Culpeper County, came to my hands late at night on the 5th. inst., and the enclosure for your brother Fielding was sent to him early next morning.

The melancholy of your writing has filled me with inexpressable concern. The debt of nature however sooner or later, must be paid by us all, and although the separation from our nearest relatives is a heart rending circumstance, reason, religeon and philosophy, teach us to bear it with resignation, while time alone can ameliorate, and soften the pangs we experience at parting.

It must have been a consoling circumstance to my deceased Sister,[65] that so many of her friends were about her. I find myself almost in the Situation of a new beginner, so much does my houses, and every thing about them, stand in need of repairs. What with Joiners, Painters, Glasiers, etc. etc. I have scarcely a room to go into at present, that is free from one, or other of

[64] The following memorandum, in the writing of Washington, is in the possession of E. Francis Riggs, of Hyattsville, Md.: "Mr. James Anderson, to Mr. Jno. Foreman dated 7th. Aprl. 1797. To cause Mr. Richmond, or any other Nursery man of character to put up 20,000 Thorns of 4 yrs. old; one half; and the other half of 3 years old; closely packed in Boxes with fog and some little earth. Also to have gathered 12 firlots of the best kind of Haws from the real white thorn. 3 plows Invented and made by James Small. All to be sent to London to the care of on whom draw for the amount of cost. Also a Gardener who understands the Nursery, Kitchen and flower Garden; and who understands the Hot and Green house, and raising early things under glasses."

[65] Elizabeth Washington Lewis, who died Mar. 31, 1797.

them. But the inside will soon be done, tho' it will require a good deal of time to make good the decays which I am every day discerning in the out buildings and Inclosures.

This leads me to ask if you know of a good House Joiner (white or black) that could be hired by the year, or month, and on what terms. I want one who is capable of making a rich finished pannel Door, Sash, and wainscot; and who could be relied on for his sobriety and diligence.

At any time, and at all times, we should be very glad to see you and Mrs. Lewis at this place; and with best regard to you both, in which your Aunt joins, I am, etc.[66]

*To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, April 10, 1797.

Dear Sir: Your favor of the 5th. instt. with its enclosures, and also one of prior date, forwarding (at the request of Doctr. Edwards) a Pamphlet from Sir John Sinclair have come duly to hand. For your kindness in sending these, and particularly for the information given in your letter of the 5th. I feel myself very much obliged.

The conduct of the French Directory towards General Pinckney is I believe, unexampled, of course has baffled all calculation: how far it has come *up to,* or *exceeded* the expectation of their partisans *among* us remains to be developed, and the approaching Session of Congress will make the discovery. The good humour, and friendly disposition of the Dey of Algiers, are pleasing circumstances; and if of duration, would be very fortunate ones for the Commerce of these United States. My complimts. (in wch. Mrs. Washington unites) are offered to

[66] From the printed text in the catalogue of *Autograph Letters of George Washington* in the Frederick S. Peck Collection, Barrington, R. I.

Mrs. Pickering and the family, and with sincerity and truth I am etc.

P. S. The Buckles[67] of which you make mention are from Colo. Humphreys to me.

To SIR EDWARD NEWENHAM

Mount Vernon, April 20, 1797.

Dear Sir: Not till within these few days have I been honoured with your favours of 13th and 25th of November last. I should if they had come to hand sooner been careful in my acknowledgment of them.

I sincerely wish that this letter may find Miss Newenham in a perfectly recovered state of health, and Lady Newenham, and yourself relieved from those cares, and solicitudes which her indisposition must naturally have occasioned. I hope also that neither this, or any other untoward circumstance will prevent you from fulfilling your long intended voyage to America.

Should this event take place at so early a period as your last letter indicated my information on the points you have referred to me will hardly arrive in season, as there is a possibility of it, the enclosed, which I have obtained from a well informed Gentleman in Alexandria, (more conversant in these matters than I am) will answer your queries with respect to the sorts of linen which are most vendable with us. The price of provisions in our markets are governed by the quality, and seasons, generally, Beef, and Mutton from January till June, fluctuate from 4d, to 6d, and from June till January from 2½d to 4d, veal, and lamb are commonly sold by the Quarter: the latter from 2/6, to 4/, the other in proportion to the age, and quality, of the Calf.

[67] A pair of knee buckles and a pair of shoe buckles; but no further description is given.

These prices you will please to observe are in the currency of this State: and that the Legal exchange between it and Sterling is 33/ 1/3. Bills however fluctuate, and at this time are at 40%, which will enable you to decide whether money or a letter of credit will best answer your purposes, the former would give less trouble though there is some risk. Bills upon London are most in demand. Consequently command the best prices.

The manner in which you employ your time at Bell-Champ[68] (in rearing nurseries of fruit, Forest trees, and shrubs) must not only contribute to your health, and amusement, but is certainly amongst the most rational avocations, for what can be more pleasing than to see the work of ones hands fostered by care and attention, rising to maturity in beautiful display of those advantages and ornaments, which by the combination of taste, with nature in the arrangement is always regaling to the eye, or the palate when the fruit is in season, I should have much pleasure in admiring your skill in the propagation, and taste in the disposal of these things, in a visit to Bell-Champ, but declining health, and an earnest longing after retirement during the remainder of my life, will fix me at Mount Vernon, or to a small circle round it, whilst I continue upon this theatre.

I will not give you the trouble of receiving a long letter from me at this time, because the probability I think is that you will have left Ireland before it can arrive there, I shall only add therefore that it was with pain I gave the information contained in my last letter, respecting the application for the Consulship at Marsailles. The enclosures which I transmitted would account for the disappointment, which is more to be regretted than censured, as it was consequential of an established Principle which called for consistant conduct.

[68] Belcamp, Rheny, County Dublin, Ireland.

Few things being in the gift of Congress it was thought that such as it could dispose of, ought to be given to the Citizens of the United States who had suffered in the service of their Country, during the late contest, and a resolution to that effect having been passed, it was found not easy to dispense with it, or I am sure your wishes would have been gratified.

I beg to be presented in respectful terms to Lady Newenham, and have the honour to be with great esteem, and regard etc.[69]

To GUSTAVUS SCOTT

Mount Vernon, April 22, 1797.

Dear Sir: I should not have taken the liberty of giving you the trouble wch the enclosures must occasion but for the request of Genl. Lee who left this yesterday and is implicated in the business to which they relate.

Messrs. Reed & Fords obligation, paid me by Genl. Lee to discharge in part a debt he owed me, the letter of the latter with Mr. Lingans note (all of which are enclosed) will be sufficient I presume, to enable you to obtain the transfer promised by Messrs. Lingan & Smith of 41 Shares; but it may not be amiss notwithstanding to add that as there seems to be delay and difficulty on the part of Messrs. Reed & Ford in a matter where in my opinion none ought to exist; it excite suspicions not very favourable for those Gentlemen, which makes me anxious to know what I have to depend upon, especially as I requested them immediately after the 28th of March to fulfil their Obligation without even having recd. an acknowledgment of my letter except in a verbal message (which I did not understand,) through Genl. Lee; I will not however add more on this Sub-

[69] From a typed copy kindly furnished by the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union.

ject at present, than to beg the favor of hearing from you relative to the transfer of the 41 Shares. With great Esteem and regard I am etc.[70]

*To THE GRAND LODGE OF ANCIENT, FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Mount Vernon, April 24, 1797.

Brothers: It was not until within these few days that I have been favoured by the receipt of your Affectionate Address dated in Boston the 21st. of March.

For the favourable sentiments you have been pleased to express on the occasion of my past Services, and for the regrets with which they are accompanied for the cessation of my public functions, I pray you to accept my best acknowledgments and gratitude.

No pleasure, except that wch. results from a consciousness of having, to the utmost of my abilities, discharged the trusts which have been reposed in me by my Country, can equal the satisfaction I feel from the unequivocal proofs I continually receive of its approbation of my public conduct, and I beg you to be assured that the evidence thereof which is exhibited by the Grand lodge of Massachusetts is not among the least pleasing, or grateful to my feelings.

In that retirement which declining years induced me to seek, and which repose, to a mind long employed in public concerns, rendered necessary, my wishes that bounteous Providence will continue to bless and preserve our country in Peace, and in the prosperity it has enjoyed, will be warm and sincere; And my

[70] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

attachment to the Society of which we are members will dispose me, always, to contribute my best endeavours to promote the honor and interest of the *Craft.*

For the Prayer you offer in my behalf I entreat you to accept the thanks of a grateful heart; with the assurance of fraternal regard and best wishes for the honor, happiness and prosperity of all the Members of the Grand-lodge of Massachusetts.[71]

*To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, April 28, 1797.

Dear Sir: Owing to my not sending to the Post Office in Alexandria with the regularity I used to do whilst I was in exercise of Public duties I did not receive your favor of the 21st. instt. until yesterday. Nor have I before, acknowledged the receipt of your letter of the 11th which also came safe.

Not expecting to have much business to transact in Philadelphia I appointed no Agent there; and if Colo. Shreve would do as he ought, it would give me, and others, less trouble than is occasioned by his drib'ling payments. He was to pay for the lands purchased of me (after the first advance) by Instalments; one of which becomes due the first day of June next and by his obligation the money was to have been paid into the Bank of Pennsylvania not expecting any part before I had made no arrangemts. therefor, and I see nothing better under the circumstances you have mentd. than for the Jersey man to pay the money into that Bank and send me the evidence of it, as I expect on that day, a payment at the same place by Colo. Ritchie to whom I sold other land.

[71] This letter was inclosed in a brief note, dated April 24, explanatory of the delay in answering the Lodge's address, addressed to Paul Revere, Grand Master; Isaiah Thomas, Senior Grand Warden; and Joseph Laughton, Junior Grand Warden. The draft of this note is in the *Washington Papers.*

As the Jersey man may be, as I certainly am, unacquainted with Bank transactions your advice in the matter might do both of us a kindness. and information given to me relative thereto would much oblige Dear Sir Your etc.

PS. Colo. Biddle used to do all my business in Phila. after the War, until my residence at the Seat of Government rendered it unnecessary; and this he did much to my satisfaction. If he is free from the embarrassments under which he laboured sometime ago and safe I should be glad to employ him again. Will you be so good as to inform me, in confidence, how this matter is with him.

*To MARY WHITE MORRIS[72]

Mount Vernon, May 1, 1797.

My dear Madam: The lustre which stood suspended in our large Drawing Room in Philadelphia, I pray you to accept from Mrs. Washington and me, as a small testimony of our Affectionate regard for you, Mr. Morris and family.

To bring it from Philadelphia, and then to send it back, carries with it an appearance so singular, as to require explanation, the following will give it tho' it may be uninteresting and tedious to receive.

It was intimated to me, that if the President took the house in wch I lived that he would (in case I was disposed to part with it) be glad to take the furniture of the two large Rooms also. Part of both I had intended to sell; the residue, in my own mind I had designated for other purposes; but to cull the best, and offer him the rest would I conceived be indelicate and therefore with the exception of the Pictures, all of which

[72]Mrs. Robert Morris, sister of Bishop William White.

were fancy pieces of my own choosing, I made a tender of the whole; at such reduced prices as he, or any other, should adjudge them to be the worse for ware. The expectation of his taking them, and the pressure of many matters previous to my departure caused me to leave the City without giving any precise directions relative to the disposition of the furniture of these Rooms beyond the offer that had been made of them to the President; of course, when in the last moment, he declined taking them, it rested on the judgment of Mr. Lear and Mr. Dandridge to dispose of them in the manner they conceived best; and the lustre was accordingly packed up to be sent to this place.

The moment the acct. of it reached me, I wrote to Mr. Dandridge to stop the shipment, and to send it to your house as the harbinger of this letter; but the Vessel, unluckily had sailed a day or two before the order reached him. I hope however, from the external appearance of the Package (for I have not opened it) it will be received without damage.

Mrs. Washington unites with me in every good wish for you, Mr. Morris and the family; and we beg to be presented in respectful terms to Docr. White and his family. Nelly Custis and her brother are in the Federal City, or they would, I am sure, join us cordially in offering their best regards. With sentiments of the most perfect esteem and attachment, I have the honor etc.

PS. The Case with the Lustre will go round by Captn. Elwood, who is, I am informed, now in the Port of Alexa.[73]

[73] A photostat of a memorandum in the writing of Washington, dated May 6, 1797, in the *Washington Photostats*, shows the following clothing on that date: "1 Full Suit of Regimentals; 1 Ditto Do half—Ditto; 1 Ditto Do Spanish Cloth; 1 Ditto do Olive colour; 1 Ditto do dark brown; 1 Ditto do lighter Do; 1 Do Do half mourning; 1 Do Do Raven grey; 1 Do Do Black.—Velvet, Silk, and Cassimer: 1 full Suit—Velvet; 1 Do Do Uncut Do."

*To GEORGE BALL

Mount Vernon, May 7, 1797.

Sir: By the Post of friday I received, with no small degree of surprise, your letter dated the 24th. Ulto. with a Post mark on the back dated Lancaster Court house the 29th.

Had not the matter you complain of been discussed and explained, at the time our bargain was closed for the Gloucester Land their might, in appearance, have been more cause for the observations you have been pleased to make than you have ground for at present. But, in turn, let me observe that there are some views of the subject which seem to have escaped you altogether.

First then I never did, or could, (unless I was so hurried or distracted with business at the time as not to know what I wrote, and have entirely forgot since what I did write) offer the Land to Mr. Fitzhugh with an interest on the Cost of *5 pr Ct.* or the *legal* Interest of Virginia, because I was a resident of a State where the *legal* Interest is 6 pr Ct., and because the Interest of the U. States by which all my money transactions have been regulated in 6 pr Ct. also.

Secondly, for argument sake, admit, that I did, *in explicit terms* offer it to Mr. Fitzhugh for £800 with an interest expressed of 5 pr Ct. from August 1789 until it was conveyed ¼ of the money to be paid down, and the other ¾ths in annual instalments, and moreover, that upon his declining to take it, it was tendered to you on the same terms. What followed? Did I not inform you upon your applying to me on this business that I should certainly be at home by the 20th. of March when the bargain might be compleated? Did you not promise to be there by that time? Yes. Did you come? No. Did you not then write me that you would certainly be here by the

first of April, hoping I would not dispose of the land to another? Did you come at that time? No. Does the latter, under the circumstances of your own failures, prove that you thought me bound by the offer I had made? was it reasonable that I should be tied and you left at liberty to come at this, or that time, or not at all as it might suit your convenience? I am mistaken indeed in my principles of justice and ideas of propriety, if I was not as much at liberty the day you came here to make a new bargain for the land as I was to offer it in the first instance; having however settled the terms in my own mind I was not disposed to take any advantage of your then seeming solicitude to avail yourself of the purchase.

But, thirdly, I will go further, and for argument sake, put all these matters aside, and then ask, how far *you* have acted up to what I had a right to expect from the purchaser, according to *your* own ideas of the proffer made to Mr. Fitzhugh? £800 with an interest of 5 pr Ct. from August 1789 until April 1797 would have amounted to about £1150. the fourth of which wd. have exceeded £287. How much of this did you Pay me? the receipt will answer £197.

There is a strong insinuation in your letter, though you scorn to take advantage of it, you add, that I have brought myself under the lash of the Law. If you think so Sir, and feel the least disposed to inflict the penalty, spare me not, try it. I believe you would soon be convinced that there is a material difference between fixing a price on land for Sale wch may be purchased or not and receiving an interest of 6 pr Ct. on a Bond, or other debts which is due and must be pd. I had resolved in my own mind (and if I am not mistaken I told you so) that if I parted with the land at all, I would have the sum I paid for it with an interest of 6 pr Ct. as compensation for lying out of my money (more than 8 years) and for some incidental expenses which have been incurred. When then a

Gentleman at the distance of 2 or 300 [miles] applied by letter to know if I would sell, and on what terms; and when I knew that this way of transacting the business might be attended with delay I conceived the most eligable mode to place both parties on a certainty was to declare what it cost and that I expected interest until it was paid. To have named a gross sum would if the bargain had been long in negociation, have defeated my own views, or if interest thereon at the close was added it might have been considered as an imposition by the purchaser. How, in the name of common sense, a case of this sort could be brought under the Statute of Usury is beyond my comprehension.

All this however, is to shew that I have acted no unfair or inconsistent part in this business, and to convince you more fully of this, if you do not like the terms of Sale, return me my receipt on, or before the first day of June next (which is allowing you ample time, as you have yourself informed me where you will expect my answer which goes by the first Post after your letter was recd.) and your money shall be returned, and an end put to any further difficulty on the subject. I am etc.[74]

*To STEPHEN MILBURN

Mount Vernon, May 15, 1797.

Sir: Having in a great measure given up the idea of Renting my Farms (from an apprehension that I could not dispose of the whole of them, and that unless I did this my objects wd. not be answered) I was not as explicit as I might have been in my answers to some of the questions you asked on friday last.

Revolving on the matter since, and believing if I wait until an offer is made for the whole, I may not rent them at all, I

[74] From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach, of New York City.

have come to a determination to inform you that if upon examining and approval of what is called my River Farm (shewn you from the front of my house) you may have it at the Rent I had fixed on the whole; to wit 1½ bushels of Wheat pr. Acre; provided we can settled the terms of the lease to mutual satisfaction. In that case, you may obtain possession as soon as matters can be so arranged as to suit the convenience of us both. And as it would require a pretty considerable sum of money to stock so large a farm I could ease you of the advance by furnishing you with a part or the whole of the Stock and implements thereon at a reasonable valuation, the agregate amt. of which to be passed into a Bond well secured carrying interest until discharged. To be more explicit before you have seen and examined the farm would be unnecessary and therefore I shall only request, that you would let me know your determination as soon as it is formed as consequent measures must be taken on my part if an agreement is likely to ensue. I am etc.[75]

*To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

Mount Vernon, May 15, 1797.

Dear Sir: I thank you for the information contained in your letter of the 19th. Ulto; and infer from it, with pleasure, that you must be better, if not quite recovered of the indisposition of which you complained, by your being enabled to write. To know this however would give me satisfaction, as I entertain an affectionate regard for you.

Various conjectures have been formed relatively to the causes which have induced the President to convene the Congress at this season of the year; among others, that of laying an embargo, is supposed by *some* to be in contemplation: whether

[75] From a photostat of the original through the kindness of George A. Ball, of Muncie, Ind.

with, or without foundation, you who are acting on the great theatre have the best means of judging. For myself, having turned aside from the broad walks of political, into the narrow paths of private life I shall leave it with those whose duty it is, to consider subjects of this sort; and (as every good citizen ought to do) conform to whatsoever the ruling Powers shall decide. To make, and sell a little flour annually; to repair houses (going fast to ruin), to build one for the security of my Papers of a public nature, and to amuse myself in Agricultural and rural pursuits will constitute employment for the few years I have to remain on this terrestrial Globe. If to these I could now and then meet the friends I esteem, it would fill the measuse and add zest to my enjoyments but if ever this happens it must be under my own Vine and Fig tree as I do not think it probable that I shall go beyond the radius of 20 miles from them.

To detail matters of private concern, would be as improper as it would be uninteresting; and therefore, upon the principle I have adopted, it will never be in my power to make adequate returns for your kind communications; which I wish may be continued when you are at leisure, and at liberty; for there is so little dependence on Newspaper publications which take whatever complexion the Editors please to give them, that persons at a distance, and who have no other means of information, are oftentimes at a loss to form an opinion on the most important occurrences. Mrs. Washington and Nelly Custis unite with me in cordial remembrance of Mrs Wolcott and yourself and with much sincerity I remain Affectly yours.

To REED & FORD

Mount Vernon, May 19, 1797.

Gentn: Your letter of the 20th Ulto. came duly to hand and through the medium of a friend in George Town to whom I

sent it and who made application to Mr. Walter Smith for the fulfilment of your obligation, I have obtained the following result.

"I have seen Mr. Smith and had conversation with him respecting Messrs. Reed & Ford and the probability of their producing the residue of the shares due to you. They intimate in their correspondence no idea of obtaining them any other way than by their funds in this place, due 11 or 12 months hence. How far their earlier necessities may compel them to part with these I know not; but Merchantile men who depend upon such distant resources for immediate purchases, cannot I think be much in cash; or they have no just ideas of Merchantile punctuality."

Let me hope Gentn. that the case is otherwise, in a word let me find that you do not mean to trifle with me in this business. I had no Idea that I was buying Shares in the Bank of Columbia (contrary too to my wishes) of which you were not possessed, I have as I informed you in my former letter, sustained a loss by receiving these Shares ni payment of 490 Dollars, in the receipt of 2800, for the 70 Shares you obligated yourself to transfer, a greater, I cannot submit to willingly, nor to the withholding of the remaining 29 Shares any longer.

Yours Ansr. as soon as convenient letting me know in decisive terms what I am to expect will oblige Gentn. Your etc.[76]

*To WILLIAM HEATH

Mount Vernon, May 20, 1797.

Dear Sir: Your kind and friendly letter of the 17th. Ulto. has been duly received and I beg you to accept my sincere thanks for the affectionate sentiments you have been pleas'd to express for me, therein.

[76] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

I can assure you, Sir, I never ascribed a motive to the letter you wrote me, on my Election to the Chair of Government, so unworthy of you as to suppose it was written with a view of "Pressing yourself into notice, or seeking for a Place." On the contrary, I was led to believe that domestic enjoyments in rural pursuits, had more charms for you, and were more congenial to your inclination, than any appointment that would draw you from home.

I hope, as you do, that, notwithstanding our Political horison is much overcast, the wisdom, temper and firmness of the Government (supported by the great mass of the People) will dispel the threatning clouds, and that all will end without any shedding of Blood. To me, [this is so demonstrable that not a particle of doubt would dwell on my mind relative thereto if our Citizens would advocate their own cause instead of that of any other Nation under the Sun; that is instead of being Frenchmen, or Englishmen, in Politics, they would be Americans; indignant at every attempt of either, or any other power to establish an influence in our Councils, or that should presume to sow the seeds of distrust or disunion among ourselves. No policy, in my opinion, can be more clearly demonstrated, than that we should do justice to *all* but have no political connexions with *any* of the European Powers, beyond those which result from and serve to regulate our Commerce with them. Our own experience (if it has not already had this effect) will soon convince us that *disinterested* favours, or friendship from any Nation whatever, is too novel to be calculated on; and there will always be found a wide difference between the words and actions of any of them.

It gives me great pleasure to hear from yourself, that you are writing *Memoirs*[77] of those transactions which passed under

[77] Heath's *Memoirs* were first published in Boston in 1798. They have been republished several times.

your notice during the Revolution war. Having always understood, that you were exact and copious in noting occurrances at the time they happened, a work of this kind will, from the candour and ability with which I am persuaded they were taken, be uncommonly correct and interesting. Whether you mean to publish them at your own expence, or by Subscription, is not intimated in yr. letter. If the latter, I pray you to consider me as a subscriber. and in any event as a purchaser of your production. That you may enjoy health to complete the work to your entire satisfaction, I devoutly pray, and that you may live afterwards to hear it applauded (as I doubt not it will be) I as sincerely wish. If I should live to see it published, I shall read it with great avidity. Retired from noise myself, and the responsibility attached to public employment my hours will glide smoothly on. My best wishes however for the prosperity of our country will always have the first place in my affections, while to repair buildings (gone much to ruin) and to cultivate my farms (which require close attention) will occupy the few years (perhaps days) I may be a sojourner here, as I am now in the Sixty sixth year of my peregrination through life.] Mrs. Washington is very thankful for your kind remembrance of her, and joins cordially with me in a tender of best regards for you. With assurances of great esteem etc.[78]

To REVEREND SAMUEL STANHOPE SMITH

Mount Vernon, May 24, 1797.

Reverend and Dear Sir: Your favor of the 18th instant[79] was received by the last post, the contents of which, relative to Mr.

[78] From a facsimile (partial) in Thomas F. Madigan's *Word Shadows of the Great* (New York: 1930). The portion in brackets is supplied from the autograph draft in the *Washington Papers*.

[79] Not now found in the *Washington Papers*.

Custis, filled my mind (as you naturally supposed it would) with extreme disquietude. From his infancy I have discovered an almost unconquerable disposition to indolence in everything that did not tend to his amusements; and have exhorted him in the most parental and friendly manner often, to devote his time to more useful pursuits. His pride has been stimulated, and his family expectations and wishes have been urged as inducements thereto. In short, I could say nothing to him now by way of admonition, encouragement, or advice, that has not been repeated over and over again.

It is my earnest desire to keep him to his studies as long as I am able, as well on account of the benefits he will derive from them, as for the purpose of excluding him from the company of idle and dissipated young men until his judgment is more matured.

I am to thank you, sir, for your exertions to remove the error of his present thoughts, and I shall hope for your further endeavor to effect it. If you find, however, that the attempt will be in vain, I shall rely on your judgment to employ his time in such studies as you conceive will be most advantageous to him during his continuance with you, and I know of none more likely to prove so than those you have suggested, if his term at college will close with the next vacation. With very great esteem &c.[80]

*To THOMAS PINCKNEY

Mount Vernon, May 28, 1797.

My dear Sir: I rely more upon your goodness than upon any excuse I can make, for not having given an earlier acknowledgment to the receipt of your obliging letters of the 10th. of January and 12th. of Feby.

[80] From the printed text in Custis's *Recollections of Washington.*

The truth is, they were rather long on their passage; but a more weighty reason than this is, they arrived towards the closing scenes of my public life, when every moment of my time was occupied either in the discharge of official duties, or in preparing for the change which was about to take place; and for these causes, were laid aside, under an idea that when I got seated under my Vine and Fig tree, I should have little else to do than to discharge all my obligations of an epistolary nature. But so far otherwise has the case been, that upon examining the state of my buildings, and other matters of private concern, which had only been transiently viewed for the eight years preceding, I found so much occasion to attend to workmen of different descriptions, and to such other diversified employments, as that at no period have I been more engaged than in the two months I have been at home.

This account is due to friendship, and to that respect which I have always entertained for your character.

Now let me congratulate you, my dear Sir, on your safe return to your native Country and friends, after the important services you have rendered to the former; and to thank you, as I most cordially do, for the favourable sentiments which you have been pleased to express for me, and of my public conduct. The approbation you have given of the latter, be assured, is highly pleasing to me. To receive testimonies of this kind from the good and virtuous, more especially from those who are competent to judge, and have had the means of judging from the best sources of information, stamps a value which renders them peculiarly grateful to one's sensibility.

It remains to be seen whether our country will stand upon Independent ground, or be directed in its political concerns by any other Nation. A little time will shew who are its true friends, or what is synonymous, who are true Americans; those

who are stimulating a foreign nation to unfriendly acts, repugnant to our rights and dignity, and advocating all its measures, or those whose only aim has been to maintain a strict Neutrality, to keep the United States out of the vortex of European Politics, and to preserve them in Peace.

The Presidents Speech[81] will, I conceive, draw forth mediately or immediately, an expression of the Public mind; and as it is the right of the People that this should be carried into effect, their sentiments *ought* to be unequivocally known, that the principles on which the government has acted, and which from the Presidents Speech, are likely to be continued, may either be changed, or the opposition that is endeavouring to embarrass every measure of the Executive, may meet effectual discountenance. Things cannot, ought not to remain any longer in their present disagreeable state. Nor should the idea that the Government and the People have different views, be suffered any longer to prevail, at home or abroad; for it is not only injurious to us, but disgraceful also, that a government constituted as ours is, should be Administered contrary to their Interest and will, if the fact be so.

But, as I did not begin this letter with an intention of running into any political disquisition, I will stop where I am, and only add, that with sincere and affectionate regard I am &c.

*To CLEMENT BIDDLE

Mount Vernon, May 28, 1797.

Dear Sir: The business I shall have to transact in Philadelphia will, more than probable, be of so pidling and trifling a nature as to produce more trouble, than profit from the Commission, to whomsoever undertakes it.

[81] Made to Congress on convening the special session, May 16, 1797, to consider the affairs with France.

Notwithstanding (this being premised) as it has always been done by you, while I was not myself in Philadelphia *as a Resident* I could not think of applying to another without first enquiring whether it would be agreeable to you to engage in it on the usual terms, or not.

If you answer in the affirmative, the first thing I should require of you would be to receive the Interest of my certificates at the Treasury, or Bank of the United States, amounting to about one hundred dollars pr. quarter; one of which became due the 31st of Mar: last, and the rest will be so in succession: and (as I am not acquainted with the form) that you would send a Power of Attorney for me to execute, thereby enabling you to do this. From this fund I would then ask you to send the things mentioned in the enclosed Memorandum. I am etc.

SUNDRIES TO BE SENT TO WASHINGTON
BY COLO. BIDDLE

19 Gilded frames for Pictures (which I have by me) of the following dimensions, viz:

1.	14½ by 16½	Inches	
10.	15 by 19	Do	
3.	22 by 18		
1.	24 — 18		In the clear, that is to shew so much of the Picture within the frame
2.	24 — 20		
2.	30 — 18		
—			
19 in all			

19 Glasses (one to each frame) suited thereto. It is scarcely necessary to mention, that these glasses must be as much larger as the rabit is, into which they are to go to, to answer. A quantity of Paper of a proper size and sort to cover the backs of the Pictures when (with the glasses) they are in the frames.

I do not want high price frames. Such as wd. cost from 3 to 5/. Pensa. Curry. a foot runng. measure will answer my purpose. Morse's Gazetteer of America, if published. Smiths[82] comparative view of the Constitutions. Unguent Dalamere—4 dollars worth pr. Memm.

To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Mount Vernon, May 29, 1797.

Dear Sir: I am indebted to you for several unacknowledged letters; but ne'er mind that; go on as if you had them. You are at the source of information, and can find many things to relate; while I have nothing to say, that could either inform or amuse a Secretary of War in Philadelphia.

I might tell him that I begin my diurnal course with the Sun; that if my hirelings are not in their places at that time I send them messages expressive of my sorrow for their indisposition; then having put these wheels in motion, I examine the state of things further; and the more they are probed, the deeper I find the wounds are which my buildings have sustained by an absence and neglect of eight years; by the time I have accomplished these matters, breakfast (a little after seven Oclock, about the time I presume you are taking leave of Mrs. McHenry) is ready. This over, I mount my horse and ride round my farms, which employs me until it is time to dress for dinner; at which I rarely miss seeing strange faces; come, as they say, out of respect to me. Pray, would not the word curiosity answer as well? and how different this, from having a few social friends at a cheerful board? The usual time of sitting at Table; a walk, and Tea, brings me within the dawn of Candlelight; previous to which, if not prevented by company, I resolve, that, as soon as the glimmering taper, supplies the

[82] William Loughton Smith. His *Comparative View, etc.*, was published in 1796.

place of the great luminary, I will retire to my writing Table and acknowledge the letters I have received; but when the lights are brought, I feel tired, and disinclined to engage in this work, conceiving that the next night will do as well: the next comes and with it the same causes for postponement, and effect, and so on.

This will account for *your* letter remaining so long unacknowledged; and having given you the history of a day, it will serve for a year; and I am persuaded you will not require a second edition of it: but it may strike you, that in this detail no mention is made of any portion of time allotted for reading; the remark would be just, for I have not looked into a book since I came home, nor shall I be able to do it until I have discharged my Workmen; probably not before the nights grow longer; when possibly, I may be looking in doomsday book. On the score of the plated ware in your possession I will say something in a future letter. At present I shall only add, that I am always and affectionately yours.

*To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

Mount Vernon, May 29, 1797.

Dear Sir: I have received your letter of the 18th. instant with its enclosures, and thank you for both. The President has, in my opinion, placed matters upon their true ground in his speech to Congress. The crisis calls for an unequivocal expression of the public mind, and the Speech will, mediately, or immediately, bring this about. Things ought not, indeed cannot remain longer in their present State; and it is time the People should be thoroughly acquainted with the political Situation of this Country, and the causes which have produced it, that they may either give active and effectual support to those to whom they have entrusted the Administration of the government (if they

approve the principles on which they have acted); or sanction the conduct of their opponents, who have endeavoured to bring about a change, by embarrassing all its measures; not even short of foreign means.

We are waiting with no small degree of solicitude for the answer of the House of Representatives, that an opinion may be formed from its complexion, of the temper of *that* body since its renovation.

Thus much for our own affairs, which, maugre the dessolating scenes of Europe, might continue in the most happy, flourishing and prosperous train, if the harmony of the Union was not endangered by the internal disturbers of its Peace. With respect to the Nations of Europe, their situation appears so awful, that nothing short of Omnipotence can predict the issue, although every humane mind must feel for the miseries they endure. Our course is plain; they who run may read it. Theirs is so bewildered and dark, so entangled and embarrassed, and so obviously under the influence of Intriegue, that one would suppose, if any thing could open the eyes of our misled citizens, the deplorable situation of those people could not fail to accomplish it.

On the first of next month, there ought to be deposited in the Bank of Pennsylva. on my acct, for the land I sold to Colo. Matthew Ritchie, the Sum of 3469 20/100. Dollars; and for other land sold Colo. Israel Shreve £720 Pennsa. Curry. Of the latter sum £200 I presume is actually paid into that Bank, as Colo. Pickering was kind enough to inform me that some Jersey man (who had bought part of the Land from Shreve) was enquiring of him, if I had any Agent in Philada. authorised to receive money; In answer, I requested he might be directed to Deposit the same in the aforementioned Bank.

And now, my good Sir, let me ask, if these sums should be lodged there, agreeably to contract, whether in the course of

business you could make it convenient to the Treasury, to receive them at *that* Bank, and give me a draught on the Bank of Alexandria, or on the Collector of that Port for the amount thereof? If you answer in the affirmative, let me request the further favour of asking you for the form of such an order on the Bank of Pennsa. as would enable you to effect this Exchange.

With sincere and affecte. regard I am etc. [C. H. S.]

*To ST. GEORGE TUCKER

Mount Vernon, May 30, 1797.

Sir: Your favor of the 24th. Ulto, from Winchester, came duly to hand; but presuming you were on a Circuit, I have allowed time for the completion, to offer you my acknowledgment of its receipt.

My Sollicitude for the establishment of a National University in this Country, has been great, and unceasing; but as the Sentiments of the Legislature have not been in unison therewith, I had postponed the further consideration of the subject to a moment of more leizure (than has lately been my lot) to see if I could devise some Plan by which my wishes could be carried into effect.

In this situation your Essay found me, and as every aid, in a measure so interesting and important, will be thankfully received, your thoughts could not fail of being acceptable to Sir, Your, etc.[83]

To GEORGE WASHINGTON PARKE CUSTIS

Mount Vernon, June 4, 1797.

Your letter of the 29th ultimo, came to hand by the post of Friday, and eased my mind of many unpleasant sensations and

[83] From the original through the kindness of Forest H. Sweet, of Battle Creek, Mich.

reflections on your account. It has, indeed, done more, it has filled it with pleasure more easy to be conceived than expressed; and if your sorrow and repentance for the disquietude occasioned by the preceding letter, your resolution to abandon the ideas which were therein express, are sincere, I shall not only heartily forgive, but will forget also, and bury in oblivion all that has passed.

As a testimony of my disposition to do this; of the hope I had conceived that reflection would overcome an indolent habit or bad advice; not a hint respecting this matter has been given to any of your friends in this quarter, although Doctor Stuart and your mother (with their children) left this on Thursday last, after a stay of a week, and both Mr. Law and Mr. Peter have been here since the receipt of it. In a word, your grandmamma, sister, and myself, are all who were acquainted therewith.

You must not suffer this resolution you have recently entered into, to operate as the mere result of a momentary impulse occasioned by the letters you have received from hence. This resolution should be founded on sober reflection, and a thorough conviction of your error, otherwise it will be as wavering as the wind, and become the sport of conflicting passions, which will occasion such a lassitude in your exertions as to render your studies of little avail. To insure permanency, think seriously of the advantages which are to be derived, on the one hand, from the steady pursuit of a course of study to be marked out by your preceptor, whose judgment, experience, and acknowledged abilities, enables him to direct them; and, on the other hand, revolve as seriously on the consequences which would inevitably result from an indisposition to this measure, or from an idle habit of hankering after unprofitable amusements at your time of life, before you have acquired that knowledge which would be found beneficial in every situation; I say *before*, because it is not my wish that, having gone through the

essentials, you should be deprived of any rational amusement *afterward;* or, lastly, from dissipation in such company as you would most likely meet under such circumstances, who but too often, mistake ribaldry for wit, and rioting, swearing, intoxication, and gambling for manliness.

These things are not without momentary charms to young minds susceptible of any impression, before the judgment in some measure is formed, and reason begins to preponderate. It is on this ground, as well as on account of the intrinsic advantages that you yourself would experience hereafter from it, that I am desirous of keeping you to your studies. And if such characters as I have described should be found instrumental, either by their advice or example, in giving your mind a wrong bias, shun them as you would a pestilence; for, be assured, it is not with such qualities as these you ought to be allied, or with those who possess them to have any friendship.

These sentiments are dictated by the purest regard for your welfare, and from an earnest desire to promote your true happiness, in which all your friends feel an interest, and would be much gratified to see accomplished, while it would contribute in an eminent degree to your respectability in the eyes of others.

Your endeavors to fulfill these reasonable wishes of ours can not fail of restoring all the attentions, protection, and affection of one who has ever been, and will continue to be, your sincere friend.[84]

*To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

Mount Vernon, [June][85] 7, 1797.

Dear Sir: Your favour of the 31st Ulto. enclosing draughts on the Collector of the Port of Alexandria for Three thousand

[84] From the printed text in Custis's *Recollections of Washington.*
[85] Misdated by Washington, May.

four hundred and sixty nine dollars and 20 cents, came to hand by the Post of Monday; and for so convenient and agreeable an accomodation, for the money received by you from Mr. Ross on my account, I pray you to accept my best thanks.

Enclosed is a receipt for the above Sum, with a certificate of its endorsation on the Bond of Matthew Ritchie Esqr., to be delivered to Mr. Ross; to whom I pray you to present my best respects, and thanks for his Agency in this business.

I must, moreover, ask the favor of Mr. Ross (if there be no deposit in the Bank of Pennsylvania previous to his leaving the City) to inform Colonl. Shreve in *decisive terms,* that I cannot submit to his trifling conduct. He has sold a part of the land for nearly double of what he was to give me, and yet, instead of paying me according to the Instalments, he sends the money (always short) by such driblets, and in such manner as to be of no real use to me. I shall be obliged, contrary to my wishes, to put his Judgment Bond in suit, to obtain justice. And this (the Bond I mean) I would transmit to Mr. Ross before the close of the Session, if he should advise the measure. Remember us in the kindest manner to Mrs. Wolcott, and be assured, always, of the esteem and affectionate regard of, Dear Sir Your etc.

[C. H. S.]

*To DANIEL OF ST. THOMAS JENIFER

Mount Vernon, May [June] 7, 1797.[86]

Dear Sir: A person by the name of Perry called upon me yesterday concerning the exchange mentioned in the enclosed letter, and seemed very desirous of effecting it.

I told him that whatever Mr Craik had done, or should do respecting it, I would abide by; or as his return from Congress must be uncertain as to time, if you were acquainted with the circumstances of this case (which indeed is more than I am)

[86] The press copy is indorsed by Washington: "should be 7th. June."

and would take the trouble of acting the part of a mutual friend between us, seeing that the equivalent proposed by him was just, I was equally disposed to leave the matter to your decision; and now take the liberty of repeating it to you, according to the promise I made him, being willing to oblige Mr. Perry if it can be done without injury to myself.

I thought too, that as you would probably have occasion to see Mr. Dunnington (concerning the rents he owes me) who must be well acquainted with the lands and all the circumstances relative to the proposed exchange that the two things might be accomplished at the sametime, and therefore I had less reluctance in making this request. With esteem etc.

*To CLEMENT BIDDLE

Mount Vernon, June 8, 1797.

Dear Sir: Enclosed is the Power of Attorney (you sent me) Executed before, and authenticated by a Notary public in Alexandria.

Let me requ[est the favor] of you to inform Mr. [Aitkens Cabinet] maker in Chestnut Street, [that no Key] came for the upper part of [the Secreta]ry (writing desk) he sent me[; and that] part of one of the side Tables [also] wanted a key. Whether it is in hi[s] power now to remedy this neglect, [I] know not; but this omission render[s] each piece of furniture less value[able,] at the same time that it makes t[he] part of the side board (wanting the key) useless as it cannot be opened.

Mrs. Washington presents her Compliments and thanks to Mrs. Biddle for her kind offer, and I am etc.[87]

[87] The press copy is mutilated and the portions in brackets are supplied from the "Letter Book," in which is also a copy of the power of attorney, dated June 8, appointing Biddle to receive "as well the Interest as the Dividends, which are or shall be payable according to Law on the whole of the funded debt of the United States wch. is or may be stock standing in my Name in the Books of the Treasury of the United States."

*To DOCTOR CHARLES L. CARTER

Mount Vernon, June 10, 1797.

Dear Sir: By Majr. George Lew[is, I re]ceived your letter of the 2d. ins[tant, toge]ther with two hundred and t[wenty six Dol]lars; being the principal [and Interest] of two hundred dollars l[ent you in the year] 1791.

The latter, that is [the Interest I] return as it was not from p[ecuniary] motives I advanced the money. [If the] loan of that small sum has been [atten]ded with any pecuniary advantag[es] to yourself, my object in lending of [it] will have been fully answered.

My best respects in which [Mrs.] Washington unites are offered to your good mother, and I am etc.[88]

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, June 12, 1797.

Dear Sir: Your favor of the 6th instant came by the last post; and I find by my unacknowledged letters, that I am undebted to you also for your letters of the 27th Apl. and 16th. Ulto.

For the mellon and other seeds you were so obliging as to send me I thank you; and when the Barbary wheat is recd. much attention shall be given to the cultivation of it. The buckles sent by Colo. Humphreys, were delivered safe by Mrs. Harrison; and in a little time I shall take the liberty of committing to your care, to be forwarded to Europe, a few letters in Ansr. to those, you have had the goodness to send me, under your Covers; The paper herewith sent, I now request the favor of you to present, with my best respects to the President of the United States. it belongs to the files of his Office; and is the Original.

[88] The press copy is mutilated. The portions in brackets are supplied from the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

of what you put the seal of your Office to; at my request, since I left Philadelphia.

I had some *hopes* that the late conduct of our great and magnanimous Allies,[89] would have produced but one sentiment in the Representatives of the people I could not be otherwise than disappointed therefore (in a degree, for there are some, I fear who under all Circumstances, are resolved to support their measures) at the opposition by so great a minority to the Reported Address.[90] But so it has been; and, so it will be, whilst men are actuated by different motives and views. It is to be hoped notwithstanding, that even those who are so tenacious of the honor, dignity and Interest of our good friends, will not be averse from guarding against their enmity by the Adoption of such means as will enable the Executive to defend the Country, against a continuation of the Outrages it has sustained on our Commerce. This being the most effective if not the only means to obtain their friendship, or forbearance. If Justice is lacking we ought to render it. On the other hand let our rights be claimed, and maintain'd with a dignified firmness. No *just offence* can be taken at this, by France whilst it must be approved by all the rest of the World. Mrs. Washington joins me in best regards to Mrs. Pickering and yourself, and with very Great Esteem etc.[91]

*To GUSTAVUS SCOTT

Mount Vernon, June 12, 1797.

Dear Sir: Encouraged by you[r former] kindness, I take the liberty of se[nding you] another letter of Messrs. Reed [& Ford] on the subject of the Shares[, due from them] to me, in

[89] France.
[90] Of President Adams to Congress, on the condition of affairs with France.
[91] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

the Bank of Co[lumbia; and to re]quest the favour of you to [enquire of Mr.] Smith, or at the said Bank, [if any effici]ent measures are in train [for trans]fering the remaining twenty n[ine shares] to me agreeably to their obligation.

Your information on this head when you are at leizure will much oblige, Dear Sir, Your etc.[92]

*To JOHN FITZGERALD

Mount Vernon, June 12, 1797.

Dear Sir: If you have had leizure to examine my unimproved lot in Alexa, more attentively, and have digested any plan in your own mind for an advantageous division of it, I would thank you for the result, as I wish to fix on a Plan.

I was informed, when in Town last, that Mr. Voss (I think the name is) would give 18d. a sqr. yard for the earth to make bricks, and that he would not deface, or injure the lot in doing so. What is your opinion on this point?

Mr. Anderson *has* engaged me in a distellery, on a small scale, and is very desirous of encreasing it: assuring me from his *own* experience in *this* country, and in *Europe,* that I shall find my acct. in it; particularly in the benefits my Stock would derive from it. The thing is new to me, in toto; but in a distillery of another kind (Molasses) you must have a good general knowledge of its profits, and whether a ready sale of the Spirit is to be calculated on from grain (principally to be raised on my own Farms) and the offal of my Mill. I therefore, have taken the liberty of asking your opinion on the proposition of Mr. Anderson. Such a house as he requires, and everything except the Stills, I could provide at a small expenditure. With very great esteem etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

[92] The press copy is mutilated. The portions in brackets are supplied from the "Letter Book."

*To REVEREND JACOB VAN VLECK

Mount Vernon, June 14, 1797.

Revd. Sir: It is with regret I find myself under the necessity of becoming an apologist for others.

Until lately I had no other expectation, or wish, than that the two Misses (my nieces and cousins to each other) were preparing for their journey to and establishment at Bethlehem. But I am informed that one of them (Maria Washington) on whose acct. the first application was made, is in very declining health (in short that she is in a consumption) and therefore adjudged by her Aunt, with whom she lives, to be unfit for the change which had been contemplated; as a principal inducement to the other's (daughter to Colo. Ball) going, was that they might continue together, I have been advised (both living at a cost, considerable distance from me) that, under the circumstances I have related, it is not intended now, to send either.

I hope, as it always appeared to me that your consent to admit these girls at the time you did, the School being full, was matter of favour, for which I felt the obligation, that no inconvenience will result from the change which has taken place. With very great esteem etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

*To THOMAS PETER

Mount Vernon, June 14, 1797.

Dear Sir: Taking it for granted that Mr. Anderson gave you his opinion of Mr. Threlkalds English Cattle, I shall only add that his advice to me is, to take only the Bull, at the price you mentioned, viz, Forty guineas. I shall be obliged to you therefore to let that Gentleman know that I will take the Bull at the above price and will send for him on any day he shall name.

I am not inclined to *offer* less than Mr. Threlkald *asks* for the three; but if he should be disposed to *take* less I could wish to know the lowest sum that I may be enabled to decide whether I shall content myself with one, or take the whole. Drop me a line by the Post for the regulation of my conduct. Mrs. Peter and the Child are well, and I am etc.

P. S. The money [shall be] paid on delivery of the Bull; and others, if taken or on demand.[93]

*To GUSTAVUS SCOTT

Mount Vernon, June 19, 1797.

Dear Sir: Your favour of th[e 16th. Inst.] enclosing the letter of Mr. Walt[er Smith,] to you has been received. [If Messrs. Reed] and Ford trifle much lo[nger with me,] in the transfer of the [deficient shares,] their conduct shall [be exposed in the light] it deserves.

Nothing I more [wish than to] improve the Breed of my Ca[ttle and Sheep;] and to effect the former, had [caused en]-quiry to be made of Mr. Gough [if he had] any young Bulls (of his English [breed)] for Sale: the result was, that he ha[d] only one (except calves) of about eight [months] old; for wch. he asked 200 dollars. Thinking this high, for one so young, [I have] authorised Mr. Peter to buy Mr. Thre[lkalds] at £75, as he is of sufficient age.

I thank you for your i[ntimati]on to Colo. Lloyd (and since to his s[on) of what you] supposed my wishes we[re; but not] knowing on what terms th[ey proposed to] supply me, I am at a los[s for the prelimi]nary steps on my part. If these Gen[tle]-men intended the Calf as a present [wch.] costs my feelings

[93] From a photostat of the original through the kindness of Walter G. Peter, of Washington, D. C. The original is slightly mutilated, and the words in brackets are supplied.

more, always th[an any] sum would do my purse; writ[ing to Colo.] Ramsay (whom I should prefer [to the other] Gentleman you have named) [wou'd have] the appearance of a sti[mula, which I] should wish to avoid: [And on the other] hand, if I am to poss[ess him as a Common] purchaser, I should li[ke to know before]hand what sum I am to [pay. If you can] give me further inform[ation on this] head it would oblige, Dear Sir Your etc.[94]

To REVEREND JEDIDIAH MORSE

Mount Vernon, June 20, 1797.

Dear Sir: The last Eastern mail brought me your favor of the 8th Inst., accompanyed by a Copy of the American Gazetteer; for the latter I pray you to accept my best acknowledgments, and the assurance of my belief that it will be found a most useful and valuable work; as evidence of this belief, I had just before the receipt of your letter, requested my Correspondent in Philadelphia (where I found they were to be had) to send me a copy. and for the kind and flattering Sentiments which you have expressed for me and Mrs. Washington in the former, I offer you my grateful thanks, being with much Esteem etc.[95]

To GUILLAUME MATHIEU, COMTE DUMAS[96]

Mount Vernon, June 24, 1797.

Sir: Through the medium of General Pinckney I was honoured with your letter, of the 24th. of January accompanying your Pamphlet on the military and Political situation of France.

[94] The press copy is mutilated. The portions in brackets are supplied from the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

[95] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

[96] He had been aide-de-camp to Rochambeau in America.

for both I pray you to accept my best acknowledgments and thanks. That you should have given me a place in your remembrance is equally flattering, and grateful to my feelings; as I could not but Esteem you while I had an opportunity of being acquainted with your merits in our Revolutionary War.

For want of a Competent knowledge of the French language, I cannot, in reading your Treatise, on the above Subjects, do complete justice to the sentiments it Contains; but I know enough to be persuaded of its merits, and to wish that they may contribute to the restoration of that peace and harmony whatever the motives may be for carrying on the War, which is so congenial to the feelings of humanity.

That it may (if not sooner accomplished) be the means of restoring our mutual friend Fayette, and his family to their liberty, health and the confidence of their Country, is my ardent wish; as it also is, that all his friends would exert themselves to effect it: the first if no more. His Son (with a Mr. Frestel who appears to have been his Mentor) are, and have been residents in my family since their arrival in this Country, except in the first moments of it, and a modest sensible and well disposed Youth he is.

I am very glad to hear, that my old friend and acquaintance Genl. Rochambeau is alive and in the enjoyment of Tolerable good health. It is some years since I had the honor to receive a letter from him; but, if it shou'd fall in your way at any time to recall me to his remembrance, by the presentation of my best regards to him, which I pray you to accept also yourself it would oblige me.

This letter will be presented to you by Genl. Marshall, one of our compatriots in the American war, and now a joint Envoy wth. Genl. Pinckney and Mr. Gerry, (all of whom I beg leave to introduce to your acquaintance as men of honor and worth)

appointed for the purpose of adjusting the difference which exist unfortunately, between our two Nations; which no man more sincerely regrets than I do, or who more devoutly wishes to have them accommodated upon principles of Equity and justice. I have the honor &c.[97]

*To CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY

Mount Vernon, June 24, 1797.

My dear Sir: To learn from your favor of the 25th of January that you were well, gave me singular pleasure; but as I had left Philadelphia before your letters dated in Paris had been received at the Secretary of States Office, and not having seen Mr. Horry[98] yet, I have only such accounts as have been given to the Public, of the treatment you met with from the French Directory. So extraordinary indeed it is, as to require no comment; nor shall I add any thing more on the subject than that your conduct on the occasion is universally approved: that it deserves to be so, is my decided opinion.

I had nothing more in view by giving you a genuine copy of the intercepted letter from me to Gouvr, Morris than to enable you, if a spurious one should be exhibited for insidious purposes, to place the correspondence in its true light. If the matter sleeps, I have no wish to awaken it. Should it, however, be brought before the public, it will prima faciæ carry along with it the mark of private intercourse; but if the case were otherwise, there is no sentiment expressed, that I have a disposition to retract.

I am much obliged to General Dumas for the Pamphlet he had the goodness to send, and for his kind remembrance of me.

[97] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.
[98] Peter Horry.

I recollect him well, as an Officer of high estimation in the French Army, that served in this country, and hope he, and others, friends to the oppressed, and distressed Fayette, will use their exertions to obtain the release of him, and his family, from the ignominious treatment which has been inflicted with so much rigour on the one hand, and borne with so much fortitude on the other.

From the proper Department you will, no doubt, be informed of every matter that is interesting for you, as a public character, to know, and from your friends and connections to the Southward you will I am persuaded, receive all such as concern you as a private one. As for myself I am now seated in the shade of my Vine and Fig tree, and altho' I look with regret on many transactions which do not comport with my ideas, I shall, notwithstanding "view them in the calm lights of mild philosophy", persuaded, if any great crisis should occur, to require it, that the good sense and Spirit of the Major part of the people of this country, will direct them properly.

The occupation of my time, unimportant indeed to all but myself, is not spent in idleness; for an absence of eight years (except short occasional visits which allowed me no leizure to inspect matters accurately) has so deranged my private concerns, and committed such depredations on my buildings, and all around them, that I have found as much occasion for workmen of various kinds, and as close employment in looking after them as if I had commenced a new establishment altogether.

This letter will be handed to you by Genl. Marshall, who with Mr. Dana of Massachusetts was appointed joint Envoys with yourself, to try if the differences with France can be amicably adjusted. You will find him well worthy of your friendship and confidence. He is a firm friend, upon true principles to his Country, sensible and discreet.

I pray you to present my best respects to Mrs. and Miss Pinckney, in which Mrs. Washington joins me, and that you would be assured, always, of the sincere esteem and affectionate regard of etc.

*To GUSTAVUS SCOTT

Mount Vernon, June 24, 1797.

Dear Sir: Your favor of 22d. Inst. was received by the Post of last night, and by Mondays Mail I will request the favour of Colo. Ramsay to receive, and notify me, of the arrival of any Calf Mr. Lloyd may be so good as to forward to Baltimore, on my Account.

By the last letter of Reed and Ford, to me, I had an assurance, that under *any circumstance* the deficient shares should be transferred by *this* time; if then, before you set out for Philadelphia it should be convenient for you to know whether they have taken effectual measures for this purpose, it would oblige me. If this is done, the matter, as it respects them, will be closed; on the contrary, if you will be so good while in Philadelphia to let those Gentlemen know that their obligation is in your hands and that I can not let the matter rest upon the event of their buying the shares under the Market price, and that I must do myself justice if they will not, it would add to the obligations you have already conferred on me in this business. With great esteem etc.

*To LOUIS PHILIPPE, COMTE DE SÉGUR

Mount Vernon, June 24, 1797.

Sir: Apologies at best, are but indifferent things, although at times they are necessary. That is the case with me at present: for having your obliging favor of the 4th of August last to

remain so long unacknowledged, it is incumbent on me to assign the reasons for it now.

The truth is, it was long on its passage, and arrived at a time when my official duties engrossed all my attention, to prepare for the Session of Congress which was then about to be held; and which, as was intended, closed the scene of my political career. That Session being an interesting one, occupied during the whole of it, all my time. Accordingly, matters of private concern were suspended until a moment of more leizure shd. arrive; and this I presumed would certainly happen so soon as I should get seated in retirement: but in this also I found myself mistaken; for an absence of eight years from home (except occasional short visits for a few days) had so deranged my private concerns, and has committed such depredations on my buildings, and every thing around them, that at no period have I been more engaged than in the last three months, to re-establish myself comfortably, under my Vine and Fig tree.

This apology, Sir, for not having acknowledged the receipt of your letter at an earlier period, is due to your politeness, and to the friendship with which you have been pleased to honour me.

Young La Fayette, to whom your letter was delivered immediately upon the receipt of it, has, together with Mr. Frestal his friend, been living with me since his arrival in this Country, except in the first moments thereof. He is a modest, sensible, and deserving youth; deserving of the parents who gave him being. Much, very much indeed to be regretted, is the rigorous fate they have met with.

Everything in my power, as a private man (and in a public character, I could not commit myself, or rather the government entrusted to me) has been essayed to effect his enlargement,

as you possibly may have heard: these endeavours have been warm and unremitted, but hitherto in vain: but I hope, notwithstanding, that a period is arrived when the joint efforts of Mr. La Fayettes friends will be able to accomplish what neither my wishes, nor exertions have been able to do.

To see, or even to hear that his health is restored, that he is in possession of his liberty, and again enjoying the confidence of his Country, would add pleasure to the days I have to live; and would be grateful to the feelings of humanity, which are deeply wounded in the unjust and rigorous treatment which has been inflicted on him.

I would, before I conclude, take the liberty of introducing to your civility the bearer of this, General Marshall, one of our compatriot in arms in the American Revolution and now joint envoy with General Pinckney and Mr. Dana, for the purpose of adjusting the unhappy differences between your country and mine, and which no man can regret more sincerely than I do. He is a man of great worth, and of the best disposition. With great consideration and respect etc.

*To RUFUS KING

Mount Vernon, June 25, 1797.

Dear Sir: I have been honoured with your letters of the 12th. of Novr. of the last, and 6th of Feby. and 26th of April in the present year; and feel myself much obliged by your kind and prompt attention to the publication of the Decree of the High Court of Chancery, of the State of Virginia:[99] the evidence of which you were pleased to forward in the London Gazettes.

As you will have the Political Situation of this country transmitted to you from the proper Department; and, no doubt, will

[99] In the Colvill estate matter.

be informed of the causes wch. have produced it, and which create a continual opposition to the Administration, detailed with more accuracy by such of your friends as are at, or near, the fountain of intelligence, than I could do, I shall say but little more on the subject of Politics, than that matters are pretty much in the train you left them; and that it is my firm belief, that *no* occurrence or event of whatsoever kind or nature it may be, will change the sentiments, or (which perhaps would be more correct) the conduct of some characters amongst us. However much to be regretted this is, by those who think differently, yet, having taken my seat in the shade of my Vine and Fig tree, I shall endeavour to view things in the "Calm lights of mild Philosophy." Persuaded that if ever a crisis should arise to call forth the good sense and spirit of the People, no dificiency in either, will be found.

For the interesting details you have had the goodness to communicate in your several letters, I pray you to accept my thanks. It is reported, and with a confidence which gives it a currency, that the preliminaries of Peace between France and Austria are actually signed. For the sake of humanity, I hope it is true, but it is an accommodation of the differences between the former and Great Britain that is to produce harmony in this Country; for nothing short of that, while there is a Party determined to advocate French measures under *all* circumstances, and to withdraw this country from that strict neutrality which its policy adopted, and the Administration has adhered to, can effect this purpose.

Let me ask the favor of you to present me in respectful terms to Mrs. King, and that you would be assured of the great esteem etc.

PS. The expence of publishing the Decree has not been transmitted; but shall be paid whenever it is made known to.

[N.Y.H.S.]

*To JOHN QUINCY ADAMS

Mount Vernon, June 25, 1797.

Dear Sir: Your favour of the 11th of Feb: and a duplicate thereof, have been duly received; and I pray you to accept my best thanks for the trouble you have had in tracing to its origin, the history of the Sword which came to my hands last year, in the manner communicated in a former letter. As it is more than probable you will have left Holland before this letter can be received, I shall give you no further trouble in the affair than merely to inform you that I have never seen, or heard more of Alte than the account given of him in your letter of the above mentioned date.

I am now, as you supposed the case would be when you then wrote, seated under my Vine and Fig-tree; where, while I am permitted to enjoy the shade of it, my vows will be continually offered for the welfare and prosperity of our country; and for the support, ease and honor of the Gentleman to whom the Administration of its concerns are entrusted. I have expressed to him my sentiments, and wishes, that you may be induced to continue in the Diplomatic line; and these sentiments and wishes, are the result of the surest conviction of its utility, as it relates to the public interest.

For the kind expressions you have extended to me, and the approbation of those sentiments, I took the liberty of submitting to my countrymen, in my late Valedictory, I have a grateful sense; and thank you for communicating them, and the approbation of good and Virtuous Men, is the most pleasing reward my mind is susceptible of, for any Service it has been in my power to render my Country.

With great truth etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

To EDWARD CARRINGTON

Mount Vernon, June 26, 1797.

Dear Sir: General Marshall, who did me the favor to spend an evening at this place on his way to Philadelphia, confirms the report I had before received of the utility of Mr. Booker's improved threshing machine, and added that a letter to that gentleman directed to your care would certainly reach him.

As I am extremely desirous (and that with as little delay as possible) to get one or two erected, and had got the scantling for them on the plan of the Scotch machine used by Mr. Jefferson, General Lee and others, I have taken the liberty of requesting the favour of your care of the enclosed letter, to which I am induced from the consideration of not having possessed myself of Mr. Booker's christened name or place of abode. I am etc.[1]

*To WILLIAM BOOKER

Mount Vernon, June 26, 1797.

Sir: From the good report I have had of your improved threshing machine, I am desirous of getting one or two of them erected; and as expeditiously as possible.

The Scantling for two, upon the Plan of Mr. Jefferson and others, of the Scotch machine, had been got before I received the account of yours; and may, I presume, be appropriated to the latter. The purpose therefore of this letter, is to know if you would undertake to erect mine; Or, if your other engagements should prevent your personal attendance, whether a person in whose knowledge and skill in the matter, you cd. place *entire* confidence, could be sent; or, lastly, whether you could spare time to make me a visit for the purpose of directing my

[1] From a copy in the Toner Transcripts in the Library of Congress.

own Carpenters (six or 7 in number, and some of them competant to follow any direction) to proceed to the execution, and for which due compensation would be made you.

I must beg the favour of a speedy answer (by Post to Alexandria) that I may know what I have to rely on: for if I cannot have them erected upon your plan in a short time, I shall proceed upon the one I had at first contemplated, so desirous am I of getting my Wheat out early. I am etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

*To CHARLES CARTER

Mount Vernon, June 26, 1797.

Dear Sir: When you informed me that Mr. Booker was erecting a threshing Machine for some Gentleman in your neighbourhood, I expressed a wish that he would come hither; but intended before we parted to have been more pointed in my request on this head, but your trip to the Federal City and early departure the morning after you returned, were the occasions of my forgetting to do so.

Let we now ask the favour of you, if Mr. Booker is at the place you supposed he would be, to endeavour to engage him to proceed (and at as early a moment as he can make it convenient) to this place; if it was only for the purpose of directing my people, if he could not himself remain to see the execution, how to proceed; The scantling for one of the Scotch machines being already prepared, wants only a director to make the alterations, and put it together. For his time, and trouble he shall be paid. At any rate, if this letter should get to your hands, let me know what dependence I can have on Mr. Booker.

I have discovered many of the Hessian flies in my wheat since you left this; but their attack of it was made too late to do it much injury; but as they may be considered as the harbingers

of those that are to come, I am under considerable apprehensions from this threatned calamity. I began my Wheat threshing on thursday last, and find the grain very good, however short the Crop may be.

Present our love to Mrs. Carter and be assured of the great esteem etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

*To RICHARD PETERS

Mount Vernon, June 26, 1797.

Dear Sir: Until last week, I had no suspicion that the Hessian fly was among my Wheat; but upon examination I found there were many. They have come too late, *this year,* however, to do me much damage; but as I view them as the harbingers of those who will visit me next year, I would guard, as far as it may be in my power, against the threatened evil.

Permit me therefore to ask, if from your own experience, or from that of others on whom you can rely, it is ascertained whether Rye or Barley (winter or Summer) is liable to this calamity? In the country above me, the Wheat, I am informed, is entirely destroyed (in places) by this fly; and from the appearances of them among mine, It is but too probable it would be the case with me next year, if I do not substitute other grain in its place. But What grain is the important question. Are Oats affected by these flies?

Where this calamity has not visited the Wheat, the grain is remarkably fine, and the quantity not to be complained of. Present me, if you please, in respectful terms to Mrs. Peters, and add thereto the compliments of Mrs. Washington. With great esteem etc.

P. S. Is there any truth in the observation that the yellow bearded Wheat will resist the injury which the common wheat sustains from the above named fly? [H.S.P.]

*To DAVID HUMPHREYS

Mount Vernon, June 26, 1797.

My dear Humphreys: Since I did myself the pleasure of writing to you by Captain O'Brian, I have been favoured with your letters of the first of Jany. and 18th. of Feby. The last in date was the first received; but neither came to hand until long after I had left the chair of Government, and was seated in the shade of my own Vine and Fig-tree.

The testimony of your politeness and friendship to Mrs. Washington and myself, which accompanied the latter, are accepted with the same cordiality and chearfulness with which I am sure they were presented. Presents however, to me, are of all things the most painful; but when I am so well satisfied of the motives which dictated yours, my scruples are removed; and I receive the Buckles (which are indeed very elegant) as a token of your regard and attachment; and will keep, and wear them occasionally for your sake.

As the Gazettes of this Country are transmitted from the Department of State to all our Diplomatic characters abroad, you will, of course, have perceived that the measure advised by you, relative to the disavowal of the forged letters (attempted to be imposed on the public, as written by me in 1776) had been previously adopted; without any of the accompaniments contained in your draught, wch was received long after the publication of it.

I am clearly in sentiment with you, that every man who is in the vigor of life, ought to serve his country, in whatsoever line it requires, and he is fit for; it was not my intention therefore to persuade you to withdraw your Services whilst inclination, and the calls of your country demanded your service. but the desire of a companion in my latter days, in whom I could confide, might have induced me to express myself too strongly on

the occasion. The change however, which I presume has 'ere this taken place in your domestic concerns, would of itself, have annihilated every hope of having you as an inmate if the circumstance had been known at the time.

On this event, which I persuade myself will be fortunate and happy for you, I offer my congratulations, with all the sincerity and warmth you can desire; and if ever you should bring Mrs. Humphreys[2] to the U. States, no roof will afford her and you a more welcome reception than this, while we are the Inhabitants of it.

To the Department of State, and the Gazettes which will be transmitted from thence, I shall refer you for the political State of our affair. ; but in one word I might have added, that nothing short of a general Peace in Europe will produce tranquillity in this country, for reasons which are obvious to every well informed, observant man, among us. I have a confidence, however, in that Providence, which has shielded the U. States from the Evils which have threatened them hitherto: and as I believe the major part of the people of this country are well affected to the Constitution and government of it, I rest satisfied that if ever a crisis should arise to call forth the sense of the Community it will be strong in support of the honor and dignity of the Nation. Therefore, however much I regret the opposition which has for its object the embarrassment of the Administration, I shall view things in the "Calm light of mild Philosophy" and endeavour to finish my course in retirement and ease.

An absence from home of eight years, except short occasional visits to it (which allowed no time to investigate or look into the real state of my private concerns) has very much deranged them; and occasioned such depredations upon buildings, and all things around them, as to make the expence of repairs

[2] Ann Frances Bulkeley.

almost as great, and the employment of attending to Workmen almost as much, as if I had commenced an entire new establishment.

The Public buildings in the Federal City go on well: one wing of the Capitol (with which Congress might make a very good shift) and the Presidents house, will be covered in this autumn, or to speak more correctly perhaps, the latter is *now* receiving its cover, and the former will be ready for it by that epoch. An elegant bridge is thrown over the Potomack at the little Falls, and the navigation of the River above will be completed, nearly, this season; through which an immensity of Produce must flow to the Shipping Ports thereon.

Alexandria you would scarcely know; so much has it increased since you was there; two entire Streets where Shallops then laded and unladed are extended into the River, and some of the best buildings in the Town erected on them. What were the Commons, are now all inclosed, and many good houses placed on them.

As my circle is *now small,* my information will be, of course, contracted; as Alexandria and the federal City will, probably, be the extent of my perambulations. If you have entered the Matrimonial list, I pray you to present me in respectful terms to your lady, and at all times, and under all circumstances, that you would believe me to be, as I really am, etc.[3]

*To JAMES ROSS

Mount Vernon, July 2, 1797.

Dear Sir: I have been in continual expectation of hearing that Colo. Shreve had deposited the amount of his second instal-

[3] A draft of a letter from Martha Washington to David Humphreys, thanking him for a gold chain, and making personal mention of Mrs. Stuart and others, is in the writing of Washington. This letter is in the *Washington Papers* under date of June 26, 1796.

ment in the Bank of Pennsylvania, agreeably to contract; but as a month has elapsed since it ought to have been done and no account of a payment there, and as it has been usual with him to offer these in driblets, by any body, at any time, and in any manner, regardless of his obligation thereby depriving me of the advantage of counting upon the money at the period when it becomes due which was a principal inducement to the Sale I have enclosed you his Bond with a request that you would put it suit, or take such measures to obtain payment, at his cost as you shall deem expedient. Below is the sums which have actually been recd., of the Instalments. My best respects are presented to Mrs. Ross, and with very great esteem etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

*To DAVID HENLEY

Mount Vernon, July 3, 1797.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 11th Ulto. from Knoxville has been duly received, and for the kind and affectionate sentiments expressed therein towards Mrs. Washington and myself, we pray you to accept our best acknowledgements, and an assurance of our esteem and regard for you. Should you ever pass, or repass this road, we should be glad to have an opportunity of repeating them to you in person, at this retreat of ours from the bustling scenes of public life.

The intercepted letter,[4] of which you were at the trouble to send me a copy, *if genuine,* is really an abomination; disgraceful to the Author; and to be regretted, that among us, a man in high trust, and a responsible station, should be found, so debased in his principles as to write it. With respect to the sentiment which relates to me, as late President of the United States, I hold it, as I shall do the Author, if he uttered it, in the most

[4]Dated Apr. 21, 1797, from William Blount to James Carey, an Indian interpreter. A copy by Henley is in the *Washington Papers.*

sovereign contempt; but such an attempt as is therein exhibited to poison the minds of the Indians, and destroy the utility and influence of the Agents employed by Government for the express purpose of preserving Peace and harmony with the Indians, and this too for the avowed design of facilitating a Plan which he is unwilling, or ashamed to express; and more than probable from the complexion of the letter, is of an injurious nature to the Country, deserves an epithet which he can be at no loss to apply.

I hope the original letter, if it carries the marks of genuineness, has been carefully preserved and forwarded to the proper department, that the person guilty of such atrocious conduct may be held to public view in the light he ought to be considered by every honest man, and friend to his Ctry. With great esteem etc.[5]

*To CLEMENT BIDDLE

Mount Vernon, July 3, 1797.

Dear Sir: I presume my letter, enclosing the Power of Attorney, had reached your hands before your favor of the 20th Ulto. was dispatched, altho' the rect. thereof was not acknowledged; and that the latter has enabled you to draw the interest of my Certificates in the Bank. Presuming on this, the letter to Mr. McAlphan[6] is sent, and open for yr. perusal.

Mr. Morse having sent me his American Gazetteer, superceds the necessity of your purchasing one for me. The Keys sent by Mr. Aikens[7] are returned, being too large, and of course useless to me, although they may be otherwise to him. With esteem etc.

PS when McAlpins acct. is paid be so good as to send it to me.

[5] From the "Washington Photostats."
[6] James McAlpin.
[7] Robert Aiken.

*To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, July 3, 1797.

Dear Sir: The enclosure, contained in Colo. Henleys letter me (which with the letter itself is forwarded) needs no comment. Had it come to me as a confidential communication, the transmission of it to you might have been attended with some embarrassment; but as it is free from this, I have no hesitation in making the government acquainted with this transaction.

The presumption indeed, and I hope the fact also is, that the letter of which the enclosure is said to be a copy, has been transmitted to your Office, or to the Department of War by Mr. Byers;[8] and if found genuine, will, no doubt have proper attention paid to it; for if such nefarious practices by men in high and responsible stations are suffered to escape without such punishment as the Constitution and Laws of our Country have provided, we may bid adieu to all order, and submit to have the wheels of Government clogged in all their movements.

If The original letter has been received at either of the Public Offices, the copy, with Colo. Henleys letter to me may be returned; for having no Amanuensis I could retain no copy of them; if it has not, the copy may remain with you, and such use thereof as the case will warrant, may be made of it. With great esteem etc.

*To THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

Mount Vernon, July 3, 1797.

Dear Sir: Not believing that Congress would adjourn as soon as some expected; and hoping that Colo. Shreve would not lay me under the necessity of putting his Judgment Bond in suit,

[8] James(?) Byers.

I have forborne until now, to send it to Mr. Ross for that purpose. But as I believe he is one of that description of men who have very little idea of punctuality; and as my wants require all my resources, I have now forwarded under cover to you: but request that you would be so good before the letter which encloses it is handed to Mr. Ross, to enquire at the Bank of Pennsylvania if Shreve, or any one in his behalf, has desposited therein for my use the sum of about two thousand dollars. In case this is done, I pray you to return to me my letter to Mr. Ross. If there be no deposit, then to give, or send it to that Gentleman by a safe conveyance.

By the public Gazettes, two things seem to be certain: Preliminaries between France and Austria of Peace, and a dangerous Crisis in England. A third however is necessary to give tranquillity to this country, and that is *actual* peace, between the latter and France. Whether that would produce harmony is at least problematical, for I am sure the views of some among us would not be promoted by such an event. The letter for Colo. Biddle I would thank you for sending to him, present me, and the family to Mrs. Wolcott, and be assured always of the esteem etc. [N. Y. P. L.]

*To THE EARL OF BUCHAN

Mount Vernon, July 4, 1797.

My Lord: Under cover from Mr. Cambbell of New York, about the time of my bidding adieu to the Walks of public life, I had the honour to receive your Lordships letter of the 1st of July 1796 from Kirkhill.

Congress being then near the close of an important Session, many matters of a public, and some of private concern (preparatory to the change which was on the eve of taking place) engrossed so much of my time and attention as to induce me to

suspend the acknowledgment of all letters not of a public nature, or requiring immediate answers, under an idea that when I should be fixed in my retreat abundant leizure would be afforded to discharge all my epistolary obligations. In this however I have found myself mistaken, for at no period have I been more closely employed, than within the three months I have been at home, in repairing the ravages which an eight years absence (except occasional short visits which were inadequate to investigation) have produced on my Farms, buildings, and everything around them.

I have taken the liberty of troubling your Lordship with these details to avoid the imputation of being inattentive to your favours; which I should be unwilling to incur, and ungrateful if I deserved to be so charged.

At the age of 65 I am recommencing my Agricultural pursuits and rural amusements; which at all times have been the most pleasing occupation of my life, and most congenial with my temper, notwithstanding a small proportion of it has been spent in this way.

I was not sanguine in my hope of obtaining tenants from Great Britain, for my Farms of the estate on which I reside, although the experiment was made. It appeared to me more probable that Capitalists, and such as would answer my purpose would rather become Proprietors than tenants; although the latter, in reality, might prove the best medium to attain the former; experience having shewn, in many instances, that *some* by making precipitate purchases, have made injudicious establishments; while *others,* by holding off too long, have expended their means, when small, before they had decided on the part of the Country, or on the plan to be adopted.

It was my constant endeavour whilst I had the honour to Administer the Government of these United States, to preserve them in Peace and friendship with all the World. Humanity,

interest and policy all combined to dictate the measure; and I have reasons to believe that the Gentleman who has succeeded to the Chair of State will pursue a similar policy; and if to stop the further effusion of human blood; the expenditure of National wealth; and the cries, and distresses of fatherless children and widows made so by the most destructive Sword that has ever been drawn in modern times, are sufficient inducements for returning it to the Scabbard, a general Peace must surely be at hand. Be these things however as they may, as my glass is nearly run, I shall endeavour in the shade of my Vine and Fig tree to view things in the "Calm light of mild Philosophy." With Mrs. Washington's compliments to Lady Buchan to which I beg leave respectfully to add mine, I am etc.

To THE EDITORS OF THE TIMEPIECE[9]

Mount Vernon, July 5, 1797.

Gentn.: Declining by public notification to receive any of the Gazettes of United States after the first of March last (unless particularly ordered) I presumed the design of sending the "Time piece" was to discover whether I was inclined to become a Subscriber or not.

Under this persuasion I expected after a laps of sufficient time to ascertain this fact that every succeeding paper would be the last, but as they are still continued, I have to offer you my thanks for those which have been forwarded and to request that no more may be sent; having no disposition to engage in Politics and receiving all the news (foreign and Domestic) from the Gazettes at the Seat of the Government I require nothing more. I am etc.[10]

[9] Published in New York by Philip Freneau and Alexander Menut.
[10] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

*To EDWARD CARRINGTON

Mount Vernon, July 7, 1797.

Dear Sir: I feel myself very much obliged by your kind and prompt dispatch of my letter to Mr. Booker, who offering to be here between the 20th, and 27th. of the present month (if that would suit me) the enclosed is to inform him that I will, and that I shall accordingly depend upon it; if you would add to the favour already conferred on me in this business by letting it receive a safe, and as expeditious a conveyance as may offer, as he awaits my answer to decide on his [mutilated] and because I am very [mutilated] having the Machine erected in [time]. With very great esteem etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

*To THOMAS ERSKINE[11]

Mount Vernon, July 7, 1797.

Sir: Your "View of the Causes and consequences of the present War with France,"[12] which you was pleased to send to me through the medium of Mr. Bond of Philadelphia, has been duly received; and I pray you to accept my best acknowledgments for this mark of your polite attention, particularly for the exalted compliments which accompanied it.

To have so conducted my steps in the intricate walks of public life and through a long course, as to have met the approbation of my Country and the esteem of good men, is, next to the consciousness of having acted in all things from my best judgment, the highest gratification of which my mind is susceptible; and will, during the remainder of a life which is hastening

[11] Member of Parliament.
[12] Published in 1797.

to an end, and in moments of retirement better adapted to calm reflection than I have hitherto experienced, alleviate pain, and soften any cares wch. are yet to be encountered, though hid from me at present.

For me to express my sentiment with respect to the Administration of the concerns of another government, might incur a charge of stepping beyond the line of prudence; but the principles of humanity, will justify an avowal of my regret, and I do regret exceedingly, that any causes whatever, should have produced, and continued until this time a war more bloody, more expensive, more calamitous, and more pregnant of events, than modern, or perhaps any other time, can furnish an example. And I most sincerely and devoutly wish that your exertions, and those of others having the same object in view, may effect what human nature cries aloud for, a General Peace. I have the honor &c.

*To THE SECRETARY OF WAR

Mount Vernon, July 7, 1797.

Dear Sir: By the last Post I was favoured with your letter of the 3d. instant and thank you for its enclosure, although, on the same day, I had, myself, transmitd. a copy thereof to the Secretary of State.

I had doubted a while, whether to forward it to your Office or that of State, but finally resolved to send it to the latter, as it seemed, more properly I thought, to belong to that Department.

If the letter (intercepted by Mr. Byers) is a genuine one, and the Gentleman's handwriting is not easily mistaken, or counterfeited, what excuse can a late Governor and present Senator of the U. S,[13] or his friends for him, offer for such Nefarious

[13] William Blount.

conduct? The defence must be curious, and will, I have no doubt, be conducted with as much effrontery as art. I hope, notwithstanding, if the fact is proved, that the author will receive all the Punishment which the Constitution and Laws of this Country can inflict and thereafter be held in detestation by all good men. To seek private emolument at the expence of Public Peace, perhaps at the expence of many innocent lives: And to aim a stroke at the reputation of a virtuous character,[14] hazarding his health, probably life, to promote tranquility between the Indians and our frontier Inhabitants; and by destroying his influence, and well earned good name among the former, to render him incapable of serving his Country and this forsooth because he may be a stumbling block in the way of a plan which he has in contemplation, is a crime of so deep a dye as no epithet can convey an adequate idea of to my mind. A poor wretch stealing the worth of a shilling, possibly to buy bread, would be hung, or confined to hard labour; and here, a plan (at which I can only guess) is on foot to defraud the public of its rights; deprive Citizens perhaps (in its consequences) of their lives; to stigmatise characters; and ultimately to produce War, with all its concomitants, wch. will, more than probable, meet with advocates.

But as you inform me that the matter would be laid before Congress, as on Monday last, I shall wait (with some degree of impatience I confess) to learn the result.[15] Always, I remain &c.

[14] Benjamin Hawkins.

[15] From Frederick J. Turner's *Documents on the Blount Conspiracy, 1795–1797*, in the *American Historical Review*, X, pp. 274, 574–606, it is stated that the United States Senate expelled Blount, July 8, by a vote of 25 to 1. Impeachment proceedings were initiated in the House, but did not come before the Senate until January, 1799, when they were dismissed. Blount's plan was to seize Florida and Louisiana from Spain and turn them over to Great Britain.

*To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, July 7, 1797.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 1st instant was brought to me by last Post.

The Journals of the 1st. 2d. and 3d Sessions of the first Congress, I have, and no later. These are in folio; one volume of the Senate, and another of the House of Representatives. If no complete set can be had, either in folio or octavo, it would be useless to obtain a copy of what I now possess; but if they are to be continued in the latter, and an entire set could be had of that size, it would be prefered on account of the uniformity.

Please to accompany the copying Press with the account of cost, and the amt. shall be transmitted in Bank notes.

With great esteem etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

*To WILLIAM BOOKER

Mount Vernon, July 7, 1797.

Sir: Your letter of the 3d instant from Richmond was recd. by the last Post, and I embrace tomorrow's Mail, the first since its arrival, to thank you for your attention to my request; to inform you that I shall be much pleased to see you here between the 20th. and 27th. according to promise; and that the Scantling got for the old, shall either be accomodated to the new Thrashing Machine, or other provided by the time above mentioned: and will have the Iron, and every thing else ready to avoid delay which cannot well happen as I have half a dozn. Carpenters, and Blacksmiths of my own.

Should any thing happen(wch. I hope will not) to prevent you from being here at the appointed time, be so good as to inform Yr. etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

*To THE EARL OF RADNOR[16]

Mount Vernon, July 8, 1797.

My Lord: The sentiments which your Lordship has been pleased to express in your favour of the 19th. of January last)[17] relatively to my public conduct, do me great honour; and I pray you to accept my grateful acknowledgment of the unequivocal evidence it conveys, of the favourable opinion you entertain of the principles by which it was actuated.

For having performed duties, (which I conceive every Country has a right to require of its citizens) I claim no merit; but no man can feel more sensibly the reward of approbation for such services, than I do. Next to the consciousness of having acted faithfully in discharging the several trusts to which I have been called, the thanks of one's country, and the esteem of good men, is the highest gratification my mind is susceptible of.

I am now placed in the shade of my Vine and Fig tree; and at the age of Sixty five, am re-commencing my Agricultural and Rural pursuits; which were always more congenial to my temper and disposition than the noise and bustle of public employments; notwithstanding so small a portion of my life has been engaged in the former.

I reciprocate with great cordiality the good wishes you have been pleased to bestow on me; and pray devoutly, that we may both witness, and that shortly, the return of Peace; for a more bloody, expensive, and eventful War, is not recorded in modern, if it be found in ancient history. I have the honor etc.

[16] William Pleydell-Bouverie, third Earl of Radnor.

[17] Radnor's letter of Jan. 19, 1797, in the *Washington Papers*, and printed by Sparks as a footnote to this letter, is represented now by a copy in the writing of William B. Sprague.

*To ROBERT GOODLOE HARPER

Mount Vernon, July 10, 1797.

Dear Sir: By the last Post I was honoured with your "observations on the dispute between the United States and France"[18] and for your polite attention in sending them to me I pray you to accept my best acknowledgments.

Being on the point of celebrating Harvest home, I must be allowed, as a Farmer, to make every other matter yield to the accomplishment thereof; that being over, the Pamphlet, I am persuaded, will be read with edification and pleasure by Dear Sir Your etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

To GEORGE WASHINGTON PARKE CUSTIS

Mount Vernon, July 10, 1797.

Dear Washington: Your letter of the first instant was received by the last mail (on Friday), and your other letter, of the eighth of June, remains unacknowledged, owing principally to engagements without doors in my harvest fields, and to company within, for we have scarcely been alone a day for more than a month, and now have a house full, among whom are your sisters, Law and Peter.[19]

To hear you are in good health, and progressing well in your studies, affords peculiar satisfaction to your friends, and to none more than myself; as it is my earnest desire that you should be accomplished in all the useful and polite branches of literature.

To correspond with men of letters, cannot fail of being serviceable to you, provided it does not interfere with your more important duties, and to hear their sentiments on particular

[18] Published in 1797. It attracted much attention and went through several editions.
[19] Elizabeth Custis Law and Martha Custis Peter.

points may not be amiss; but you are not to forget that your course of studies is under the direction of Dr. Smith, who is, at least, equal to any you can correspond with; who knows what you have learned, and what is necessary for you to learn, to be systematical. I enjoin it strongly upon you, therefore, not suffer any opinion or advice of Mr. Z. Lewis, however well meant they may be, to divert you from the prosecution of any plan which may be marked out by Dr. Smith, or to produce the least hesitation in your mind, for no *good* can come of it, and much *evil* may.

It gives me much pleasure to hear that you have got a chamber-mate that is agreeable to you. We hope he will continue to be so, for your mutual satisfaction and benefit.

The weather has not been intensely hot with us; at no time this summer has the mercury exceeded 90°, and but once, and this was on the twenty-fourth of June, has it been so high.

If it has been usual for the students of Nassau college to go to the balls on the anniversary of the Declaration of Indepence, I see no reason why you should have avoided it, as no innocent amusement or reasonable expenditure will ever be withheld from you.

I take it for granted, that your grandmamma and sister Nelly (if no more the family) are writing to you, and as they detail more than I can the domestic news, I will only subscribe myself, Your etc.[20]

*ADVERTISEMENT

Mount Vernon, July 10, 1797.

The Subscriber having resolved to lay off the half acre lot which he holds in the town of Alexandria (bounded by Prince and Pitt Streets) into convenient building squares, gives this

[20] From the printed text in Custis's *Recollections of Washington.*

public notice thereof; and of his intention to lease them forever, on ground Rent.

Five and an half feet extending from Prince Street, will be added to the Alley already left by Mr. Rickets, across to Mr. Halleys lot; and another Alley of ten feet will be laid out about midway the lot from Pitt Street until it intersect the former Alley.

All the lots on Prince street will extend back to this Alley, and be about 83 or 4 feet in depth. And the lots North thereof will extend from Pitt Street to the first mentioned Alley, and be four in number of equal front (about 21 feet each). The other lot will have a breadth of 26 feet on Prince Street and about 83 or 4 on Pitt Street or may be divided into [illegible] remaining front on the former street will be divided into [illegible] lotts, equal in size, and abt. 24 or 5 ft. front each.

If any persons should be inclined to make offers for the lots here described, or any of them, Mr. Jas. Anderson (my Manager) will receive the same. [illegible] shortly, the lots will be exposed at public sale, of which notice will be given.

[N.Y.P.L.]

*To JOHN W. BRONAUGH

Mount Vernon, July 11, 1797.

Sir: Enclosed you will receive a copy of the courses and distances of my tract of 7276 Acres of Land on the Great Kanhawa, adjoining Poketallico Creek.

I am obliged to you for giving me the offer of 2000 Acres of your land in that quarter, but my own want of money induced me to sell two tracts of near 5000 Acres in the Counties of Washington and Fayette in the State of Pennsylvania for much less than the real value of them. but

If you are going to the Kanhawa, and it should fall readily in your way to do it, I would thank you for information, when you return, of the situation, or rather circumstances, under which my lands on that River are, for I am totally in the dark respecting them. I am etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

To SAMUEL WASHINGTON[21]

Mount Vernon, July 12, 1797.

Dear Sir: I perceive by your letter of the 7th Instant that you are under the same mistake that many others are, in supposing that I have money always at Command.

The case is so much the reverse of it, that I found it expedient before I retired from public life to sell all my Lands (near 5000 Acres) in Pennsylvania in the Counties of Washington and Fayette, and my lands in the Great Dismal Swamp in Virginia, in order to enable me to defray the expences of my station, and to raise money for other purposes.

That these lands might not go at too low a rate (for they sold much below their value) I was induced after receiving prompt payment for part, to allow credit for the remainder, of the purchase money, in obtaining payment of which from two of the purchasers, I find much difficulty; but a third having within these few days paid me an installment of three thousand Dollars, I will rather than you should be compelled to sell your land, lend you a third of them, altho' it will be inconvenient for me to do so; and may be the means of retarding my purchase of wheat for my mill: which for want of it, has been very unproductive to me for several years; I might indeed say an expence to me.

[21] Son of Washington's brother Charles.

It is because you have assured me that misfortunes have brought on your present difficulties (tho' by the by let me observe if you had inspected as you ought, the staking of your wheat more closely, the spoiling thereof might have been avoided) and because I have heard that you are industrious and sober that I put myself to the inconvenience, of parting with the above sum; for I wou'd not lend it for the purpose to enable you to indulge in any thing that is not strictly œconomical and proper; and I shall add further, that it will be my expectation that the money be immediately applied to the uses for which you have required it, for you may be assured that there is no practice more dangerous than that of borrowing money (instance as proof the case of your father and uncles) for when money can be had in this way, repayment is seldom thought of in time; the interest becomes a moth; exertions to raise it by dint of Industry ceases, it comes easy and is spent freely: and many things indulged in that would never be thought of, if to be purchased by the sweat of the brow. in the mean time the debt is accumulating like a Snow ball in rolling.

I mention these things to you, because your inexperience may not have presented them to your mind; but you may rely on it, that they are indubitable facts, and have proved the ruin of thousands, before suspected. Great speculations and sometimes trade may be benefitted of obtaining money on Interest, but no landed Estate will bear it.

I do not make these observations on account of the money I have purposed to lend you, because all that I shall require is, that you will return the nett Sum when in your power, without Interest. It may and at any rate as it was[22]

[22] From the unfinished copy in the "Letter Book" in the *Washington Papers*.

*To WILLIAM STRICKLAND

Mount Vernon, July 15, 1797.

Sir: I have been honoured with your favours of the 30th. of May and 5th. of September of last year.

As the first was, in part, an answer to a letter I took the liberty of writing to you, and the latter arrived in the middle of an important Session of Congress, wch. became more interesting as it drew nearer to its close inasmuch as it was limited by the Constitution to the 3d. of March, and on that day was to give political dissolution to the House of Representatives, a third part of the Senate, and the Chief Magistrate of the United States I postponed from the pressure of business occasioned thereby the acknowledgment of all private letters which did not require immediate answers until I should be seated under my own Vine and Figtree where I supposed I should have abundant leisure to discharge all my epistolary obligations. In this however I have, hitherto found myself mistaken, for at no period have I been more closely employed in repairing the ravages of an eight years absence (except short occasional visits which allowed no time for that investigation which, since my re-establishment here I have found my buildings, gardens, and every thing appertaining to them so much required.) Engaging workmen of different sorts, providing for, and looking after them together with the necessary attention to my Farms have occupied all my time since I have been at home.

Unimportant as these details must be to you, an apology in my estimation seemed necessary for suffering so interesting a letter as yours of the 5th. of September to remain so long unacknowledged. and I could offer none better than the facts which occasioned it.

I was far from entertaining sanguine hopes of success in my attempt to procure tenants from Great Britain but being desirous of rendering the evening of my life as tranquil and free from care as the nature of things would admit I was willing to make the experiment.

Your observations with respect to Occupiers and Proprietors of Land have great weight, and being congenial with my own ideas on the subject was one reason, though I did not believe it would be so considered, why I offered my Farms to be Let: Instances have occurred, and do occur daily to prove, that capitalists from Europe have injured themselves by precipitate purchases of free hold estates immediately upon their arrival in this Country, while others have lessened their means in exploring States and places in search of locations; whereas, if on advantageous terms they could have been first seated as tenants, they would have had time and opportunities for the propensity to become holders of land themselves should continue for making advantagious purchases. But it is so natural for Man to wish to be the *absolute* Lord and Master of what he holds in occupancy, that his true interest is often made to yield to a false ambition. Among these the emigrants from the New England States may be classed and will account in part for their migration to the Westward. Conviction of these things having left little hope of obtaining such tenants as would answer my purposes, I have had it in contemplation ever since my return home to turn my Farms to Grazing, principally as fast as I can cover the fields sufficiently with Grass, Labour and of course expence will be considerably diminished by this change; the Nett profit as great and my attention less divided; whilst the fields will be improving.

Your Strictures on the Agriculture of this country are but too just, it is indeed Wretched, but a leading if not the primary

cause of its being so is, that instead of improving a *little* ground well we attempt much, and do it ill. a half; a third, or even a fourth of what we mangle, well wrought and properly dressed would produce more than the whole under our system (if it deserves that epithet) of management yet, such is the force of habit that we cannot depart from it. The consequence of which is, that we ruin the lands that are already cleared, and either cut down more wood if we have it, or emigrate into the Western country.

I have endeavoured, both in a public and private character, to encourage the establishment of Boards of Agriculture in this country, but hitherto in vain; and what is still more extraordinary and scarcely to be believed, have endeavoured, ineffectually, to discard the pernicious practice just mentioned from my own estate; but in my absence, pretexts of one kind or another have always been paramount to orders. Since the first establishment of the National Board of Agriculture in Great Britain, I have considered it as one of the most valuable institutions of modern times; and conducted with so much ability and zeal as it appears to be under the auspices of Sir John Sinclair, must be productive of great advantages to the Nation, and to mankind in general.

My system of Agriculture is what you have described, and I am persuaded, was I to farm it on a large scale, would be improved by the alteration you have proposed, at the same-time I must observe that I have not found Oats so great an exhauster as they are represented to be. But in my system they follow Wheat too closely to be proper, and the rotation will undergo a change in this, and perhaps in some other respects.

The Vetch of Europe has not succeeded with me; our frosts in winter, and droughts in Summer, are too severe for them. How far the mountain, or wild Pea, would answer as a substitute by

cultivation is difficult to decide, because I believe no trial has been made of them and because their Spontaneous growth is in rich lands only; that they are nutricious in a great degree in their wild State, admits of no doubt.

Spring Barley (such as we grow in this country) has thriven no better with me than Vetches. The result of an experiment made with a little of the true sort, might be interesting. Of the field Peas of England (different kinds) I have more than once tried, but not with encouragement to proceed; for among other discouragements they are perforated by a bug which eats out the Kernal. From the cultivation of the common black eye peas I have more hope and am trying them this year both as a crop, and for plowing in as a manure; but the severe drought under which we labour at present, may render the experiment inconclusive. It has, in a manner, destroyed my Oats and bids fair to do so by my Indian Corn.

The practice of ploughing in Buck Wheat twice in the Season as a fertilizer is not new to me; it is what I have practiced, or I ought to have said rather, attempted to practice the last two or three years; but like most things else, in my absence, it has been so badly executed that is the turning in of the plts. has been so illy timed, as to give no result. I am not discouraged however by these failures, for if pulverizing the soil by fallowing, and turning in vegetable Substances for manure are proper preparatives for the Crop that is to follow; there can be no question that a double portion of the latter, without an increase of the ploughing must be highly beneficial. I am in the act of making another experiment of this sort and shall, myself attend to the operation, which however may again prove abortive from the cause I have mentioned, viz, the drought.

The lightness of our Oats, is attributed more than it ought to be to the unfitness of the climate of the middle States. That this may be the case in part and nearer the Sea board in a

greater degree I will not controvert; but it is a well known fact that no country produces better Oats than those that grow on the Alligany Mountains immediately Westward of us. I have heard it affirmed that they weigh upwards of 50 lbs. the Winchester bushel. this may be occasioned by the fertility of the soil and the attraction of moisture by the Mountains, but another reason and a powerful one too, may be assigned for the inferiority of ours, namely that we are not choice in our Seeds and do not change them as we ought.

The Seeds you were so obliging as to give me, shared the same fate that Colo. Wadsworth's did; and as I believe seeds from England generally will do if they are put into the Hold of the Vessel, for this reason I always made it a point whilst I was in the habit of importing Seeds to request my Merchant, and the Masters of Vessels by which they were sent, to keep them from the heat thereof.

You make a distinction, and no doubt a just one, between what in Engld. is called Barley, and Big or Beer; if there be none of the true Barley in this country, it is not for us, without experience, to pronounce upon the growth of it; and therefore, as noticed in a former part of this letter, it might be interesting to ascertain whether our climate and Soil would produce it to advantage. No doubt, as your observations while you were in the United States, appear to have been extensive and accurate, it did not escape you that both Winter and Spring Barley are cultivated among us: the latter is considered as an uncertain crop So. of New York, and I have found it so on my farms: of the latter, I have not made sufficient trial to hazard an opinion of the Success. About Philadelphia it succeeds well.

The Cassia Chamoecrista, or Eastern shore bean as it is denominated here, has obtained a higher reputation than it deserves; and like most things unnaturally puffed, sinks into disrepute. Ten or more years ago, led away by the exagerated

accounts of its fertilizing quality, I was induced to give a very high price for some of the Seed; and attending to the growth in all its Stages, I found that my own fields wch. had been uncultivated for two or three years, abounded with the same Plants, without perceiving any of those advantages which had been attributed to them.

I am not surprised that our mode of fencing should be disgusting to a European eye; happy would it have been for us, if it had appeared so in our own eyes; for no sort of fencing is more expensive or wasteful of timber. I have been endeavouring for years to substitute live fences in place of them, but my long absences from home has in this, as in every thing else frustrated all my plans that required time and particular attention to effect it. I shall now (although it is too late in the day for me to see the result) begin in good earnest to Ditch and hedge, the latter I am attempting with various things but believe none will be found better than Cedar; although I have several kinds of white thorn growing spontaneously on my own grounds.

Rollers I have been in the constant use of many years; in the way you mention; and find considerable benefit in passing them over my Winter grain in the Spring, as soon as the ground will admit admit a hoof on it. I use them also on Spring grain and grass Seeds after Sowing, and sometimes before, to reduce the clods when the ground is rough. My Clover, generally, is sown with Spring grain, but where the ground is not too stiff and binding, it Succeeds very well on Wheat, sown on a light Snow in February, or beginning of March; It sinks with the Snow, and takes good root. And Orchard grass, of all others, is, in my opinion, the best mixture with Clover: it blooms precisely at the same time, rises quick again after cutting, stands thick, yields well, and both horses and Cattle are fond of it,

green or in Hay. Alone, unless it is sown very thick it is apt to form tussacks; if of this, or any other Seeds I can procure, you should be in want, I shall have great pleasure in furnishing them.

I should have been very happy in forming an acquaintance with the Gentleman of whom you speak so highly (Mr. Smith of Ross-Hall) but unless he has been introduced on a Public day, and among strangers, unaccompanied by any expression to catch the attention, I have not yet had the pleasure to see him, nor have I heard more of Mr. Parsons than what is mention of him in your letter. Your sentiments of these Gentlemen, or others, or giving letters of introduction to any of your acquaintance, requires no apology, as I shall always be happy in shewing civility to whomsover you may recommend.

For the detailed account of your observations on the Husbandry of these United States, and your reflection thereon, I feel myself much obliged; and shall at all times be thankful for any suggestions on Agriculture subjects, you may find leisure and inclination to favour me with, as the remainder of my life (which in the common course of things being now in my 66th. year cannot be of long continuance) will be devoted wholly to rural and Agriculture pursuits.

Mrs. Washington feels the obligation of your polite remembrance of her, and Mr. and Mrs. Law, who went from hence yesterday, have added a daughter to their Stock, and are all in good health. For the trouble you took in going to Hull, to see if any of the emigrants who were on the point of Sailing from thence for America would answer my purposes as tenants, and for your very kind and friendly offer of rendering me Services, I pray you to accept my sincere thanks, and an assurance of the esteem and regard with which I am.[23]

[23] From the original through the kindness of George A. Ball, of Muncie, Ind.

*To SIR JOHN SINCLAIR

Mount Vernon, July 15, 1797.

Sir: Since my last to you, dated in Philadelphia the 6th. of March, I have been honoured with yours and Lord Hawke's joint favour of the 28th of March 1796 introductory of Doctr. Scandalla; who gave me the pleasure of his company in June last, and whom I found a very sensible, and well informed man.

I have also received your seperate favours of the 21st. of February and 29th. of March, in the present year: The last accompanying your printed account of the origin of the Board of Agriculture and its progress for the three years after its establishment. For your kindness in forwarding them, I pray you to accept my best thanks.

I will keep one copy of this Work myself, and shall read it, I am sure with pleasure, so soon as I have passed through my harvest, which is now nearly finished; the other copies shall be put into such hands as I conceive will turn them to the best account.

Your not having, in either of the letters acknowledged above, mentioned the receipt of two from me dated the 10th. and 11th. of Decr. 1796; the last a private and very long one, fills my mind with apprehension of a miscarriage, altho' I do not see how it should have happened, as they went with several other letters under cover to Mr. King (our Minister in London) who in a letter to me, dated the 6th of February following after giving information of what he had done with my other letters, adds "and as soon as Sir John Sinclair returns to Town I will also deliver the letter addressed to him."

Was it not for this information I should, by this conveyance, have forwarded a duplicate.

The result of my enquiries of Members of Congress, attending the December Session, varied so little from the details I had

the honour to give you concerning the prices of land &ca. in my private letter of the 11th of December as to render a second edition unnecessary. The reduction however, in the price of our produce since last year, (flour having fallen from fifteen to seven or eight dollars a barrel, and other articles in that proportion) may occasion a fall in the price of Lands. A stagnation it has already produced, and I have been told a reduction also, in some of the latter Sales.

Our Crop of Wheat this year from the best information I have been able to obtain, will be found very short, owing to three causes; an uncommon drought last autumn, A severe winter with but little Snow to protect it, and which is still more to be regretted, to what, with us is denominated the Hessian fly, which has spread devastation, more or less, in all quarters; nor has the latter wheat escaped the rust. The grain however, except where the rust appeared before it was hard, is extremely fine. We are equally unlucky in our Oats, occasioned by a severe drought since the month of April. With sentiments of high esteem etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

*To WILLIAM PEARCE

Mount Vernon, July 17, 1797.

Sir: My Overseers at Union and Dogue run Farms are endeavouring to play the same game they did last year, that is, to raise their wages; but as I am fully resolved not to do it (especially as the price of produce is reduced a hundred pr Ct.) I am induced to ask you, as Clark who engaged with Mr. Craik is dead, and expectation from that quarter is at an end, if you could recommend a person whom you know would suit me, for Union farm?

It is not impossible but that I may reduce the hands at Union farm and place it and Dogue run Farm under the same

Overlooker; but even in this case, I will not give more than Sixty pounds wages, with the Usual allowances of Provisions.

I shall insist upon a Dairies being attended to by the Overseers wife, and that Fowls shall be raised for my Table; and that nothing shall be sold from the Farms for *their* benefit; as the wages, with the allowances of Provisions, is all the man and his wife have to expect.

I would thank you for acknowledging the receipt of this letter by the Post, as soon as it gets to hand, that I may be certain of its safe arrival: and as soon after as possible, let me know (without absolutely engaging any one) what dependence I could place on your getting a *good* Man; with, or without a wife, but not too large a family. It is necessary I should hear from you soon on this subject, as some are offering, and the season for engaging good Overseers is at hand.

I hope to hear your health is restored to you, and that your crops have been, and are likely to be, good. My Crop of Wheat is as good as I had any reason to expect; but the Hessian fly began just before the harvest to cut it down. Next year I expect their attack will be formidable and severe. Could there be any dependance on purchasing three or 4 hundred bushels of Rye in your Neighbourhood, and at what price?

I wish you and family well and am your friend etc.

PS. The drought is, and has been extremely severe upon us: Corn not half leg high; what will be the consequence I know not. [N.Y.P.L.]

*To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, July 21, 1797.

Dear Sir: I again take the liberty of requesting that the letters herewith sent may accompany your dispatches to Mr. King, who I also hope will have the goodness to excuse the trouble I give him in this business, to insure the safety of the dispatches.

I hope I shall not have occasion to give either of you much more trouble in this way, as correspondencies of this sort were not of my seeking, and I have no disposition to keep them up, except with Sir John Sinclair (President of the National Board of Agriculture) on Agricultural Subjects.

One of the last productions of this Gentleman I transmit to you, with a request that if the Plan of establishing a similar Board in these United States should be re-entered upon at the next Session of Congress, you will be kind enough to lay it before the Committee which may be appointed for the purpose of preparing that business. I am etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

*To RICHARD PETERS

Mount Vernon, July 23, 1797.

Dear Sir: Receive my thanks for the information given in your letter of the 3d. of July, and for the offer you have obligingly made, of procuring for me, Seed of the Yellow bearded Wheat.

Influenced by the opinion which prevailed some years since that that kind of Wheat would resist the Hession fly I then procured seed of it, and have kept myself in stock ever since, to make use of it upon a larger scale, if occasion shd. render it necessary. And so well persuaded as I am that the attack of this insect will be severe next year, I shall reduce considerably, my seeding of Wheat the coming Autumn; and fill the deficiency with rye, principally. Of Wheat, however, I shall sow three kinds: The early, or May Wheat, as it is called here, in a small proportion; and the residue of the Yellow bearded, and a very fine white (also forward) wheat which I obtained last Fall from the Mountains.

Soon after I wrote you last the Rust seized my Wheat straw, and a good deal injured the latter grain. And a severe drought

which we have laboured under since April, until this day week, has rendered our Crop of Oats extramely short and rendered our meadows scarcely worth cutting and till *now,* by a second fine rain yesterday, left us little hope of making Indian Corn.

Present me and Mrs. Washington in affectionate terms to Mrs. Peters, and be assured of the sincere esteem, etc.

[N. Y. P. L.]

To GEORGE WASHINGTON PARKE CUSTIS

Mount Vernon, July 23, 1797.

Dear Washington: Your letter of the 14th instant has been duly received, and gives us pleasure to hear that you enjoy good health, and are progressing well in your studies.

Far be it from me to discourage your correspondence with Dr. Stuart, Mr. Law, or Mr. Lewis,[24] or indeed with any others, as well-disposed and capable as I believe they are to give you speciments of correct writing, proper subjects, and if it were necessary, good advice.

With respect to your epistolary amusements generally, I had nothing further in view than not to let them interfere with your studies, which were of more interesting concern; and with regard to Mr. Z. Lewis, I only meant that no suggestions of his, if he had proceeded to give them, were to be interposed to the course pointed out by Dr. Smith, or suffered to weaken your confidence therein. Mr. Lewis was educated at Yale college, and as is natural, may be prejudiced in favor of the mode pursued at that seminary; but no college has turned out better scholars, or more estimable characters, than Nassau. Nor is there any one whose president is thought more capable to direct a proper system of education than Dr. Smith; for which reason, Mr. Lewis, or any other, was to prescribe a different course from the one you are engaged in by the direction of

[24] Zechariah Lewis.

Dr. Smith, it would give me concern. Upon the plan you propose to conduct your correspondence, none of the evils I was fearful of can happen, while advantages may result; for composition, like other things, is made more perfect by practice and attention, and just criticism thereon.

I do not hear you mention anything of geography or mathematics as parts of your study; both these are necessary branches of useful knowledge. Nor ought you to let your knowledge of the Latin language and grammatical rules escape you. And the French language is now so universal, and so necessary with foreigners, or in a foreign country, that I think you would be injudicious not to make yourself master of it.

You certainly do not observe the degree of heat by Fahrenheit's thermometer, or it must be in a very hot exposure if you do; for at no time this summer has the mercury been above 90°, or at most 91°, at this place; and I should think Princeton must be as cool at least as Mount Vernon, being nearly two degrees north of it.

Your mamma went from here (with your sister Nelly) to Hope Park, on Wednesday, and is as well as usual. Your sister Law and child, were well on that day; and Mr., Mrs., and Eleanor Peter are all well at this place now, and having many others in the house, among whom are Mr. Volney and Mr. William Morris. I shall only add, that I am etc.[25]

To BUSHROD WASHINGTON

July 28, 1797.

Dear Sir: Mr. King our Minister at the Court of London, to whom I sent the decree of the High Court of Chancery of this

[25] From the printed text in Custis's *Recollections of Washington*.

On July 23 Washington wrote a brief note to Samuel Hanson, of Samuel, requesting a certificate of the transfer of 100 shares of stock in the Bank of Columbia, from Tobias Lear to Washington. This note is in the New York Public Library.

State with a request to have it published according to the Direction therein contained "in some public Paper in the Kingdom of Great Britain for two months successively," has caused the same to be inserted agreeably thereto in the London Gazette as may be seen by One herewith enclosed (Several of which has been forwarded to me) And wrote to me as follow on the occasion.

I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 25th August and Doctr. Nicholl whose Advice I have asked has been so obliging as to give me information respecting the manner in which the order of the Court of Chancery shd. be published. In a day or two I will procure its insertion in the proper News Paper, Some little attention will be requisite to avoid as far as practicable the great expence which commonly attends this kind of publication. The News Paper containing the notification, shall be transmitted to you agreeably to your directions.

I have thought it expedient to make this Communication to you that any use you shall adjudge proper may be made of it. Always and Sincerely etc.[26]

*To RUFUS KING

Mount Vernon, July 31, 1797.

Dear Sir: I did not expect that I should have had occasion to trouble you again relative to my Administration of the Estate of Colo. Thomas Colvill. But the Gentleman who instituted the suit in the Chancery Court of the State, on my behalf informs me that it is indispensable that an affidavit of the Decree's having been published two months successively in an English paper (as appears prima facia to be required) should be returned; and he wishes *much* to possess the same by the next term, in March, early.

Taking it for granted that the Decree has been published two months successively, I presume and hope there can be no

[26] From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.

difficulty in having it testified by the Editor of the Paper in which it was inserted, and forwarded to me by duplicate.

Excuse me, I pray you, for giving you this trouble; and be assured always of the high esteem etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

*To THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Mount Vernon, July 31, 1797.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 24th Inst. came to hand by last post.

The *demand* of Mr. Monroe is no more than another card played in the same game.[27] The moment I can get at my Papers (for having no convenient Place yet to arrange them; they remain in an indigested mass) I will send you a copy of that which you require.

A Lady of my acquaintance (who lives at a distance from hence) being under some apprehension of an approaching cancer, has written several times without obtaining satisfactory information to know if the Nephew of Doctr. Tate (his name I am unacquainted with) still lives in Philadelphia. in what part of the City, and whether his Applications for Cancerous complaints are attended [with the success his Uncles were.

If it is not too much trouble you will oblige me, and in a more especial manner the Lady by solving the foregoing questions. Let the information be the entire subject of a letter, that I may send it with or without your signature to the person, for whose satisfaction it is required.

Several late publications in France, speak a language which it is presumed was not expected by some of its advocates here; And considering the characters from whence it proceeds And

[27] Lee had written (July 24): "Mr. Monroe has lately demanded in a letter to the Secretary of state an explanation of the letter of recall which was sent to him in France." Lee's letter is in the *Washington Papers*.

the changes which have taken Place in their late Actions, augur something more favorable, than was to be expected from the conduct of the Directory, of that Country. With Great Esteem etc.][28]

*To THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mount Vernon, July 31, 1797.

Dear Sir: Your favor of the 25th Inst. was received by the last Post.

Mr. Monroe's application, is nothing more than a continuation of the *old* game, in a new form; and as I presume he means to play it with all the advantages that are to be derived from his auxiliaries *here,* I will thank you for the *whole* of what will come before the public, now, or then, according to circumstances.

I would thank you also for forwarding the letter herewith sent by the first conveyance to Mr. King, and the duplicate by some other Vessel.

I hear with much pleasure that the Public sentiment in France towards these U S is not in union with the Directory. It would be to be regretted on every account if it was. Yours etc. [N.Y.P.L.]

[28] From a photostat of the incomplete original in the Chicago Historical Society. The part within brackets is supplied from the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers.*

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